

# Sikhism

## AN OECUMENICAL RELIGION

*by*

**Sirdar Kapur Singh**

*edited by*

**Gurtej Singh**

1993

INSTITUTE OF SIKH STUDIES

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Chandigarh

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# CONTENTS

Preface	
Publisher' s Note	4
Science and Religion	7
Phenomenality of Sikhism	16
The Heart of Sikhism	39
The Sikh Thought	47
Social Implications of Sikhism	58
A Perspective	64
Sikhism and the World Society	69
Ahimsa -Its Political Grammar	71
War and Sikhism	74
The Axial Ritual	76
Sikh Congregational Prayer	83

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In a meeting of the Institute of Sikh Studies it was expressed that there was an evident gap in the Sikh literature, in so far as the works of late Sirdar Kapur Singh, the most distinguished and brilliant exponent of Sikh Theology in the Twentieth century, stood unpublished. It was proposed that the Institute should take steps for their publication. Accordingly, it was decided to approach Sardar Gurtej Singh to whom, it was learnt, Sirdar Kapur Singh had bequeathed his works and manuscripts. As a first installment, Sardar Gurtej Singh kindly agreed to edit and give us for publication the manuscript of "Sikhism — An Oecumenical Religion". The Institute is grateful to him for his generous gesture.

Sirdar Kapur Singh, as we all know was an unrivalled of the Sikh religion since his knowledge and comprehension, both of Indian and Semitic religions, and Western philosophies profound and up-to-date. The present work is, indeed, a masterly analysis, on the one hand, of the Sikh Religion, and on the other hand, of the proud rise of science and technology, and its continuing and baffling frustrations in solving the problems of man in the current century. Wittgenstein, who at one time claimed to say the last word on philosophy, and called all metaphysical propositions senseless, wrote. "The result of philosophy is not a number of 'philosophical propositions', but to make propositions clear." "My propositions are elucidatory in this way : he who understands finally, recognises them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed on to it)." He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly. Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent." Kapur Singh writes that after all his claims and acrobatics, Wittgenstein ultimately speaks just the language of the mystic. It is in this context that Sirdar Kapur Singh lucidly expounds the lofty system of the Gurus as something unique in the religious thought of man. We hope the present publication will help the English-knowing world to understand clearly the position of the Sikh Gospel in the religious thought of the world. The publication has deliberately been priced low, so that the largest number could profit from this authentic exposition of the Sikh thought. The Institute would like to express its thanks to Dr. Hazara Singh for his advice and suggestions in the publication of this work.

(Dr.) Kuldip Singh,  
President,

December 25, 1992

Institute of Sikh Studies,  
Chandigarh.

## PREFACE

In one of his letters to me, Sirdar Kapur Singh had written: “Of late I have been seriously preparing my mind for my last exit, and there are things I want to talk to you about — intimate and domestic — and I want to bequeath my papers, notes and books to you, such as they are .... A little immovable, property that I have, I wish it to go to my only son...”

Unfortunately I could not meet him during his last days. So his papers reached me a long time after his death. These include original manuscripts of several of his books. Eversince it has been the keen desire of those connected with the Sirdar to see them in a printed form. Interested public has every right to have access to this material. I am painfully aware that a delay of sorts has occurred for which I am also partly responsible. But it was not of negligence. I wanted them to be published by an institution matching the Sirdar’s status.

The publication of **Parasaraprasna** by the Guru Nanak Dev University was somewhat disappointing. The Sirdar was quite dissatisfied with the delay caused and with the quality of the work turned out in the initial attempt. The decision to reprint the first seventy or so pages was long delayed. The University wanted him to authorize someone else to give the print orders. I was finally asked to do that on behalf of the author. That did not happen. The book which was already in the press, ended up acquiring a set of ‘editors’. Consequently alterations, sometimes touching on distortion, were introduced in the work. Howsoever beneficial the exercise might have been for the academic careers of the ‘editors’, it introduced errors which are not there in the original, author’s style stood dwarfed and the general quality of the work was impaired. Nobody was disturbed that it amounted to exploiting the author’s untimely death.

My experience with an attempt to get the **Me Judice** published by one of our prestigious Universities was not different. It is primarily a collection of independent articles and was prepared initially for The Sikh Review by me after a hard work of two years. When it was realized that they would not be publishing it, a common friend persuaded me to entrust a copy of the manuscript to a professor. It was handed over in a ready to print form. Then things began to happen. Two professors collaborated to edit it further. They converted it into stuff required to justify the existence of incapable people. Had they only lent their names to it, the damage would not have been considerable, but they chose to mutilate the original and to also add some misleading footnotes. What was prepared as a single work with the author’s consent, was split up into several books. It was presumably done to swell the number of books edited by professors who find this kind of academic pursuit intellectually satisfying. One of the ‘editors’ later ridiculed me for not entering into a “legal agreement” — meaning thereby that there are no rules of ethics which bind our learned people who are attempting to shape the character of our young men and women. They have to be pinned down to documents typed neatly in triplicate.

Thereafter I felt duty bound to seek preservation of the original character of the work even if it meant delaying the publication a bit.

**Sikhism : An Oecumenical Religion** was prepared by the Sirdar himself for publication. The manuscript was prepared under his supervision. It required no editing and none has been done. Meticulous care has been taken to publish it in the exact form the author had intended it to be published.

The last time I was asked by him to write a foreword to one of his books was when I was a student. I wrote exactly as I felt and it turned out to be in glowing terms. My friend and teacher mildly chided me for being too lavish in my praise of the Sirdar. Today I do not intend to eulogize him. I need not even be enthusiastic about the present work, because I know that the reader’s evaluation of it is bound to border on the ecstatic. A few paragraphs by way of making the reader familiar with his personality will, however, be in order.

I had known Sirdar Kapur Singh since my student days. He was a complex multifaceted

personality. He was a political rebel, a parliamentarian, a bureaucrat, a scholar, a mystic, and a poet rolled into one. During his lifetime he adorned many chairs of authority; he did justice and brought credit to them all. He was an ideal teacher, a peer of the most scholarly, a powerful writer and an effective speaker who held his audience spell-bound both inside as well as outside the legislature. He wrote equally effectively both in Punjabi and English; was equally expressive both in poetry as well as prose. On history, philosophy or the interpretation of scriptures, he always had something profound and worth saying. Originality characterized his speeches and writings. Everything he laid his hands on became an inspiration for all those around him. He was equally at home in several languages and was familiar with all the intricacies of Sanskrit, Pali, Persian and Arabic.

Everyone who came in contact with the author, knows that he was an extraordinary man in every way. His absolute commitment to Sikhism, which for him was Truth, is well known; so also is his passion for objectively interpreting it. How does one adequately describe a carefully penned work by such an author? It is a profound work by a fair man of high moral commitments, of unusually sharp sensitivities, of precise understanding and exact expression. If “learned” suffices, it is quite in order to call it a learned thesis. To avoid being lavish in praise of the author and the book, I should write no more about one or the other. A reader who is interested in a work of this nature, is bound to be fascinated by it. On that confidence it may be launched.

I thank all the learned members of The Institute of Sikh Studies who took pains to see this book through the press. They have spared themselves no effort and have been generous with their time. I thank the Institute for publishing it.

Above all I am thankful to the Guru who has provided me the opportunity of discharging my debt to the late Sirdar Kapur Singh. I am happy that thousands of his admirers will discover yet another reason to cherish his memory. With their good wishes, it may be possible to provide them with few other such reasons in the near future. Until that can be done, I crave their indulgence.

742, Sector 8, Chandigarh  
January 5, 1993.

Gurtej Singh  
*Professor of Sikhism*

## CHAPTER I

### SCIENCE AND RELIGION. .

When an intelligent person tries to comprehend clearly man's recent historical past of two or three centuries, he becomes aware of two well marked trends in his feelings and attitudes. One such trend is the expansion of the political and cultural frontiers and influence of the West, beginning round about the 15th century of the Christian era. The other, an intellectual and emotional estrangement from religion as an organising principle of individual attitudes and human societies and a consequent idealisation of Science and technology, which gains prominence from about the 17th century. A combination of these two has hugely gone to make up, what we know today, as the modern world and the modern man. It was in the 15th century that the West began its movement of physical expansion, beginning with the discovery and domination of the so far little known surface of the globe, the 'new world', and a part of the well known and recognised, 'old world', by the restless seafaring and adventurous peoples of West. The expansion and impingement of one society into another is not a new thing in history but what is unique about the expansion of the modern West is that it has been literally world-wide, a thing which has never happened in the past. Previously, societies and civilizations have expanded but for want of sufficiently adequate means of communications, their expansion has been contained and limited. The expansion of the West which we are considering is unique in its ubiquity as being world-wide, and the means by which it has been possible for it to be so have resulted in, what may be called; the contraction and near annihilation of the 'distance' that separates and confirms separate identity. It is this annihilation of distance that has made the modern world almost unique in history in terms of its impact on the social and spiritual planes of modern man. It is for the first time in the history of the world that this mutual impact and impingement of human societies and civilizations has become so assaultive and intimate, and so pervasive and contemporaneous. The other trend characteristic of our recent past is almost a revolution, seen to be a marked retreat, revulsion, both sentimental and intellectual, from religion, of the modern man. This phenomenon becomes obtrusively marked in the West, for the first time, after the Middle Ages, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and this has had deep repercussions on the mind of the East from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The reasons for this retreat from religion in the West are different from those that pertain to the mind of the East. But this marked change in the feelings and attitudes of modern man, in the West and East both, is unmistakable.

The reasons for this revolution or revulsion in the Western mind since the 17<sup>th</sup> century are twofold, moral and intellectual. The moral reasons are traceable to the historical development of Christian institutions in the West. Certain events took place during the last two hundred years and more which are sensitive and independent minds reject the institutional Christian religion, which to them was the Religion, as such. The main reason for this was the conflict between Papacy and the secular authority of Emperor Fredrick, the Second, which surfaced in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the course of which conflict gradually projected the Papacy, the supreme repository and upholder of the Christian religion, as a self-centred and worldly institution, unmindful of and unconcerned with its professed and proclaimed spiritual principles, motivated by naked desire for worldly power, and basically moved by the sentiment of revenge against those who opposed its desire for political power, in as much as the Popes engaged in a persistent and malign persecution of the heirs of their opponent, Fredrick, the Second. Again, when in 1305 A.D. a French archbishop was elected as Pope he chose to set up his seat at Avignon in France rather than at Rome in Italy and, thus, for over seventy years, there was a line of Avignon Popes who were unwilling to move to Rome which meant sacrifice of French luxury for Roman austerity, with the result that in 1378 A.D. a new Pope at Rome was set up and thus, for a period, there were two Popes leading to endless confusion in the common man's mind, loss of prestige of the established religion, and general decline in the faith of the people that

encouraged rise of heretical doctrines. Besides, the French Popes were instrumental in the extermination of the order of the Knight Templars at the inspiration of the French King who wanted their property, and further, the second French Pope, Pope John XXII, built up a grasping and predacious financial organization to increase the papal revenues since many would not recognise the Avignon Popes. These financial imposts were seen as disgustingly mercenary and commercial in character, such as the *spolia*, a right of seizure of the movable property of deceased bishops originally belonging to his relatives, the tithe, a ten per cent tax made universal on all incomes except those of certain ecclesiastical dignitaries and functionaries, revenues from vacant benefices, visitation fees, proceeds from the sales of indulgences, fees for legal settlements or for special dispensations. The convergence of bankers, merchants, usurers and prostitutes who flocked to Avignon during this period to share in the loot, further added to the impetus towards a sharp decline of faith of honest people in religion. The split in the Church, called, the Great Western Schism, which resulted on account of this double Papacy, one at Rome and one at Avignon, gave a very severe shock to the cause of religion, and the matters were not improved when in 1409, the Council of Pisa agreed that an Oecumenical Council rather than the Pope was the supreme authority in Church, and then it proceeded to depose both the Popes and elected a new one. But as neither of the old Popes would recognise his deposition, the result was, three Popes instead of one as originally desired. This certainly could not have diminished the shock the people's minds had received by the earlier events. Contemporaneous with these unedifying spectacles there had arisen an intellectual movement, which was called Renaissance, the essence of which was an attitude of mind which regarded the principle of the Greek way of life and thought as an authority on human values, independent of Christianity. If Hellenism was valid independently of Christianity, it was necessarily in rivalry with the authority of the Christian Church. This intellectual movement of regarding as something fundamentally valid, outside Christianity and the Christian Church, was further reinforced by certain scientific discoveries and speculations of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries which were in open conflict with certain dogmas of Christianity, particularly those pertaining to the *Genesis*. It was found that the beginnings of the evolution of the world as the Science revealed through independent and unbiased observations, was in basic conflict with the account in the revelations of the Bible.

It was for these reasons, in the main, that the Western mind felt a moral revulsion and intellectual distrust towards the religion which they had been, throughout the centuries; taught to believe as the Religion of their ancestors, and for these reasons they also felt that the dogmas of religion were intellectually unacceptable. They further felt that the religious dominance of the West had led to nothing but social strife and unquenchable hatred. They saw further that this strife was motivated by naked, sordid worldly objectives which had little to do with the high spiritual professions of Christianity. They argued and concluded that Religion as such is of this nature, a sham and a cloak for worldly motives, devoid of any genuine spiritual content, capable of nothing but producing blood-shed and mutual hatred amongst men. They, in addition, had perceived that the account of the origin of the universe and man as given in the basic authority of the religion of their ancestors was demonstrably erroneous, being in conflict with the direct evidence of unbiased observation and speculations. The great pyramid of cosmology which had been built up by such great minds as Saint Paul and Saint Thomas Aquinas out of the elements of Jewish lore, Greek philosophy and Christian myth, no longer could command the assent of independent and intelligent minds.

Both these revulsions, moral and intellectual, which took birth in the mind of the Western man reinforced each other and it is difficult to say whether the one or the other played the conclusive, role in finally alienating the sensitive and intelligent minds of the West from Christianity, the only form of religion which the West knew as valid.

Since religion no longer held the central interest of the sensitive and intelligent minds of the West, their vast reservoirs of energy were diverted towards another channel, that of non-controversial Natural Sciences. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century France, for instance, Diderot, in his *Encyclopedia*, encouraged men to follow Natural Science in preference to theology, for, the one leads to certitude and the



other to mere controversy. As the data collected in respect of the Physical Sciences accumulated and the speculative thought based upon this data assumed more and more definite collections, the result was a progressive demolition of the dogmas of medieval Western Christianity which had constituted the spiritual heritage of the West for the last 1500 years and more, and as a consequence the Western life was secularised.

It is this movement towards secularisation which has given birth to the dominant political systems of the modern world which swear by socialistic and regimented forms of society.

The ancestral spiritual tradition of the Western man of the past 1500 years or so had held before his mind the vision of a life of a far superior quality and abundance than the one he was leading on earth. This was 'the Paradise' of the religion, located in the life hereafter. It was the 'Kingdom of Heaven' that would compensate for all the ills and deprivations of the earthy life that had enthralled the soul of the Western man all these long centuries. Now that Christianity, which was equated with the Religion by the Western man, stood discredited as a way of life and as a system of understanding and insights, it appeared to him that although the 'Kingdom of Heaven' was itself an illusion, a kind of paradise on earth was nevertheless a practicable possibility. The advancement in Applied Sciences had opened up a vista of tremendous technological progress which could make production of material goods possible in such abundance that no man may suffer for want of them. Thus, an economic reorganisation of society so as to eliminate the possibility of exploitation of man by man appeared as the obvious next step to achieve progressive satisfaction of material necessities of man. It was, as it now appears, somewhat uncritically presumed that full satisfaction of material necessities of man, was the only precondition for the full unfoldment of the intellectual and finer potentialities of man. Socialistic abundance and communistic consumerism will raise most, if not all men to the moral and intellectual height, such as that of Plato and Socrates. Since this appeared to be a practicable and the loftiest objective, the Western man inferred, mistakenly as it would seem now; that this is the only desirable objective for man to pursue on this earth and that the means necessary for, the realisation of this objective, therefore, stand in need of no further justification.

That both these inferences are erroneous can now be seen. That it is these inferences and this line of thought which lies at the back of the political movements and systems which have engulfed the whole world of today, during the last fifty years or so, is also apparent.

This movement of thought and the change in feelings and attitudes of the Western man during the last two centuries and more, resulting in the secularisation of life in all its aspects, has permeated into the Eastern societies also and has gripped the mind of the intellectual minority of the Eastern man till it has become the chief motivation for social transformations in the East.

Only very recently, in the Muslim world, in particular, there has emerged a visible painful reaction against stranglehold of Eastern cultures and societies by this alien secular sickness of human mind that has almost succeeded in banishing religion as the central organising principle of human life and societies.

The reasons that had led to this secular stranglehold on the human mind in the East were not identical with those that had prevailed in the West.

The technological inventions and the powers which they placed in the hands of the Western man were primarily instrumental in giving him economic and political dominance over the Eastern societies, apart from his superior organisational skills during the last two hundred years. The reactions this dominance aroused in the Eastern man were varied and confused. It was felt and assumed, particularly by those whose ancestral religion and culture were non-Judaic, that the superiority of the Western man was a necessary ingredient of his religion and culture, though disillusionment followed with the realisation that adoption of Christianity and the Western culture hardly provided a sure key to the power which was in the hands of the Western man. In the Islamic Judaic societies the prestige and lure of the Western religion and culture remained inconsiderable, but the impact on the non-Semitic religions and cultures was, for a time tremendous, although the keen minds even of non-Semitic societies were quick to comprehend that the homo-occidentalis

subjugating the Eastern societies was essentially a non-religious and unmoral species. To Dr. Wolff, who visited Lahore in 1832, Maharajah Ranjit Singh said, "You say, you travel about for the sake of religion, why then do you not preach to the English in Hindustan?" When Dr. Wolff repeated this to Lord William Bentick in Simla, the Governor General observed, "Alas, this is the opinion of all the natives all over India." <sup>1</sup> It was thus realised that the real source of power was not the Western religion which the West had itself discarded, nor the Western culture, which was unmoral essentially, but that this power was grounded in the scientific knowledge and superior technology: It was after a painful process of trial and error that the Eastern mind came to cherish the distressing belief that the modes in which this power of technology and organisational skills was expressed and utilised were, in some mysterious way, inseparable from the mental and physical habits of the Western man. For instance, it was realised that the superiority of the Western fighting soldier, through whom the West had established and through whom the West maintained its dominance, political and economic, over the Eastern societies, did not lie in his superior personal courage and physical powers of endurance over the Eastern soldier, but in the methods of training, the superior arms, and the techniques of his warfare. It was then discovered, again after a painful process of trial and error that, the Western methods of military training could be successfully adopted only by and in a society which has certain well-defined social bases, for instance, that in a society based on caste, an army trained on European methods of discipline could not be properly raised. Again, the superior arms of the Western man were the results of not only a sustained scientific tradition of his racial history but were also the product of a certain attitude of mind, such as views the facts revealed by the physical observation as the only, or at least the main, aspect of what is 'real'. The Eastern mind, thus, by a slow and painful process discovered that he could not shake off the humiliating-domination of the West except by accepting and adopting his oppressor's methods of military training and techniques of warfare. He further realised that he could not adopt these methods and techniques unless he changed the theoretical bases of his society, which could not be changed unless he abandoned and discarded the fundamental postulates of his religious and spiritual traditions. He, in short, discovered that he could not compete on equal terms with the Western predator, his political master, unless he could compete with him in acquisition and practical application of scientific knowledge, and he realised first with horror, and then with resignation that, this was impossible unless his whole attitude towards life and his basic views on the nature of man and universe underwent a fundamental change.

It was through this process, entirely different from the road followed by the Western man, that the Eastern societies have come to adopt a secularised version of life similar to that, accepted and adopted by the West.

By the end of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we find that the mankind has undergone a change and a metamorphosis, comparable to which there is nothing to be pointed out in the previous periods of history of mankind. This consists of the fusion of the various societies of the mankind into almost a world and global society, if not in actual feelings, at least in nascent attitudes and aims. Such a world society, a global human society, had never been within the domain of possibilities in the past, though international Muslim society was a grand historical phase of organised and sustained efforts at setting up a monolithic, closed world society such as was unheard of and inconceivable before the Communist phenomenon in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We also find that, at this period, this global society is not only physically continuous, that is capable of inter-communication without impassable barriers, but also has accepted a secularised attitude of mind which, at least tentatively, regards the purpose of human life as somatic, mundane, as primarily centred on this planet, which we call the earth. This is the basic principle of secularisation accepted as the main, if not the only standard, by which human and social activity and progress is primarily judged by the modern man.

It is in this context, that the generality of mankind has deviated from a deep interest in the domain that belongs to the religion, the domain of Numenon, as contradistinguished from the

domain of the phenomena. The mankind has tacitly accepted, by this point of time, that what is worthy of the attention of serious, pragmatic and sensible minds is that which is revealed to the ten categories of the Sankhya the jnanendryas and karamendryas, the five abstract powers of cognition and the five physical sense-organs, lumped together by the West, as the five physical senses, the information received, gathered through them, collated and formulated as the Physical Sciences, and that the only practical and rationally acceptable ideal which should animate and afflame the human society is one which is grounded in the knowledge and reality thus revealed.

In this context and in this climate of mind, the religion has no significant place. But during the recent decades of this century there has come to pass another revolution, as yet no more than on adumbration, but nevertheless real, in the minds of intelligent men which is no less fundamental and all-embracing than the one already considered. It is this latter revolution in the minds of men, the men of the global society, the humanity of the whole world as represented by its keen, sensitive and intelligent minds, which has tended to arouse a new and intense interest in the values of religion and its revival, a reversal of the process of retreat from it in the preceding centuries.

The reasons for this revival of interest in religion are, mainly, three: One is that, the movement of scientific activity and interest which started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the speculative edifice which it built to explain the nature of man and the universe has clearly and definitely come to a dead end, a cul-de-sac. The keen minds of men of Science, throughout the world, and from more directions than one, have converged on to a single realisation that the scientific activity and the speculations based upon its achievements is necessarily incomplete and errant, and thus unsatisfying, and that, therefore, something more, and, perhaps, something altogether and qualitatively different is necessary.

To begin with, the basic postulate of the Physical Sciences is the principle of continuity, though there are, and always have been philosophers who believed that the world is a plurality, that it is composed of things essentially distinct. But the principle of continuity, that is, that all distinctness must, at the base, arise from an all-pervading identity is not only a fruitful hypothesis of Science which has worked so well so far, but it also seems to be the very ground of what we deem as rational, the foundation of the web of human reason, the principle which the Sainkhya calls, *satkaryavada*, the principle that *ex nihilo nihil fit*, from nothing, nothing can come out, whatever is always is, and whatever is not never is, that the utterly different and distinct creation is unthinkable, only modification is there.

When Einstein gave us  $E = MC^2$ , explaining that Energy and Matter are substitutibles, that is, matter is convertible into energy obeying a uniform law, he merely demonstrated the soundness of this basic postulate of Physical Science and when he refused to accept further scientific discoveries of Niels Bohr, Schrodinger and Heisenberg proposing that matter behaved both as particles and as waves, that within the atom this motion was governed by probability, that structure of matter was like a dice game decided by chance, he was not only being fanatical, opposing fact with faith but was simultaneously subordinating science to religion by his credo and firm faith that fundamental indeterminism that relied on a throw of the dice simply cannot be the true structure of the Universe. "I shall never believe that God plays dice with the world", he said. He did not succeed in constructing his 'unified field' theory that would unite electromagnetism gravity, space and time under one set of equations, but he did succeed in showing that science cannot prove conclusively that what it says is the final truth and that what the priest says is altogether trivial. Science cannot make religion redundant or invalid, nor can it otherwise shoo it away. Whether, therefore, we postulate some rudimentary form of consciousness for the ultimate particles of matter, or postulate an initial dualism between mind and matter, this basic problem of nature of Reality bristles not only with unsolved but unsolvable problems and, in the ultimate analysis, the human nature and the physical nature remain enigmas, incapable of being accounted for, one in the terms of the other, and whether we accept the mathematico-physical aspect of the universe as ultimately real, or the mental

aspect, our reason refuses to accept it so, simultaneously with its refusal to accept a plurality of principles as ultimately rational. The recognition of the existence of the sub-conscious and unconscious levels of the human mind by the secular west in the recent years has merely deepened this enigma of the nature of the ultimate Reality. Again, the scientific account of our universe appears clearest and most convincing only when it deals with inanimate matter, and that too it just appears so. Here the account appears as relatively satisfactory, because it, more or less, satisfies the kind of interest that we take in these phenomena. For instance, when we are told that matter consists of little electrified particles arranged *vis-à-vis* one another in certain ways, our curiosity about matter is largely satisfied. Or, when we are told the age, position, size; velocity and chemical constitution of a star, we feel that we have acquired the necessary scientific knowledge about this star. But, is the last craving of our curiosity on the subject finally set at rest thereby? In other words; has the ultimate truth about these matters been revealed to us by this knowledge? When physical science encounters these questions it then admits that the only answer to these questions is in the negative, but it is forced to admit further that the methods of scientific investigation have their inherent limitations such as make science basically incapable of returning final answers on the nature of the universe and man. Not that the, physical science, has not, as yet returned the final answers, but that in the very nature of things, it shall never be able to do so. This is so in respect of the sciences dealing with the inanimate matter, but the state of affairs is even less satisfactory as regards sciences dealing with life. Many of the questions that are quite fundamental appear to be unanswerable by science. What, for instance, makes us regard a living organism as a whole and not merely as an aggregate of its parts? There is this notion of 'wholeness' or individuality and the logical trick employed by the Buddhist scholar Nagsena, in his *Malindapannha* of arguing that since a chariot is nothing but the sum-total of its parts, such as the axel, the wheels, etc; likewise all individualities, animate or inanimate, are mere aggregates, is not an ultimately satisfying answer. Even if every bodily activity of a living creature was explained in terms of physical and chemical changes, an accomplishment which *prima facie* appears ab initio impossible, our original question will still remain unanswered unless the *purposive order* of these changes which obviously intrudes into the future, is asserted as either obviously misconceived and absurd or a mere tautology, that is, when we say 'purpose' we merely mean to say, non-purposive existence, which is no explanation; it is a piece of affrontry. True psycho-analysis introduces primary concepts which are non-technical and these concepts are far too vague and indefinite to be called scientific. To say that the most amazingly diverse manifestation of human conduct, all come about through *libido*, whatever that may be, is to say nothing 'scientific'; it is merely a vulgar paraphrase of the much more dignified and respectable statement that all these come about through the Will of God. Since the explanation seeks to explain everything, it, in fact, explains nothing.

These predicaments of the Physical Sciences are inherent in the nature and scope of the scientific method, which nature and scope was determined by certain historical causes.

The founders of the 'scientific method', quite consciously began by deliberately abstracting and selecting from the totality of human experience, only such elements as possessed quantitative aspects. Later attempts, therefore, to make that method unravel and explain the totality of human experience, were bound to prove inadequate. Since mathematical relations subsist between those quantitative aspects of the experienced universe, it was assumed that Mathematics was the key to the ultimate secrets of the universe. Neo-Platonism, containing important Pythagorean elements which was prevalent in Europe at that time, reinforced this bias. The belief that Mathematics is the one true key to the secrets of the physical nature has been well justified by the recent success in causing the atomic fission, though that is no good reason to suppose that only those elements which acquaint us with the quantitative aspect of the material phenomena are real, or more real, as the pseudo-scientific outlook tacitly assumes. Nor, that such elements alone refer to the real objective world. It is a false and unwarranted assumption of science that our perceptions of colour, our response to beauty, our sense of mystic communion with God have no objective counterpart,

though this astonishing presumption has been tacitly made by men of science or the advocates of science, the protagonists of the materialistic outlook, which in the words of Bertrand Russell means:

“Man is the product of causes which had no provision of the end they were achieving, that his origin, his growth his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collections of atoms, that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave, that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noon-day brightness of the human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man’s achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins; all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand.”<sup>2</sup>

All these terrible and dismal conclusions were endowed with a certitude which was assumed to be the sole prerogative of the scientific method, and wherein, quite without any warrant, the real was identified with the quantitative, till recently when the science began getting self-conscious, and as the Sikh scripture says,<sup>3</sup> “Suavity of speech and humility of conduct is the apogee of knowledge and virtue”, and as T.S. Eliot has said, “The only wisdom we can hope to acquire is the wisdom of humility”, the men of science no longer teach that the scientific method of approach is the only valid method of acquiring true knowledge about reality. With enthusiasm that at first appears strange, eminent scientists now insist that science can give us but a partial knowledge of reality, and that the knowledge outside the domains of science is not illusory or in any way less real. It is ungrudgingly conceded now that exact science deals wholly with structure and not with the nature or attributes of the phenomena. This concession which the science now willingly, and even with a positive show of enthusiasm makes has far reaching implications in respect of the subject of religion, for, it means that the nature of reality is not pre-judged, the science no longer requires us to believe that our response to beauty or the man’s mystic communication with God, have no objective counterparts. It is perfectly possible, so far as the science is concerned, that they are, as they are claimed to be, genuine clues and visions of reality and the science is no longer in a position to contest the claim that these clues constitute better awareness of the reality than that revealed by the scientific method.

It is thus revolution in the thoughts of intelligent minority of the modern mankind that has turned the scales in favour of a deep and significant revival of religious interest, the magnitude of the results of which revolution will manifest fully as the present century closes. Secondly, the secularisation of life has led to political theories and systems which have thrown up organisations of society the basis of which is progressive and all-inclusive regimentation. The state, as the embodiment of the spiritual yearnings of these societies, finds it necessary to acquire and exercise more and more and growing control over almost every activity of the individual’s life till no real personal freedom of any kind is left to the individual. This is not merely the reality of modern political systems and societies but is also the logical outcome of the postulates on which such societies are based. If a state has to be socialistic, it must exercise control over the labour activities of its citizens. If it is to be a welfare state, it must have the power to control and regiment the resources, the whole of them if necessary, physical and mental, of its citizens, and thus the State tends to be truly totalitarian, not merely by the logic of necessity, but by the inner dynamics of its postulates. It is not only that practical considerations make it necessary for the state to control its citizens in almost all aspects of their lives, but also, it is a logical outcome of the theories of the nature of the world and the significance of individual life in it, which these societies accept as fundamental. There is, therefore, no substance in the hope or promise that this all-inclusive and total regimentation of man is only a transitory phase, a necessary but passing evil. On the other hand, this regimentation is inherent in the very theoretical bases of such societies. In a welfare society, the area of freedom of the individual must be progressively restricted till it almost vanishes into a zero, as the quantum of “welfare” granted by the state becomes ampler and ampler. This then is the fundamental inner contradiction of all Socialism. Though the irrational motivation in the theory of Socialism is the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, its dynamism is a regimentation, but

the only purpose which direction and regimentation might arguably serve are the purposes of war, and not of peace and progress. Again, its reality in the world nowhere has achieved its aim without converting the entire community into slaves and without creating a privileged class to run the socialist state machine. Further, socialist experimental experience shows that tremendous material progress is compatible with an oppressive system of rule and complete denial of social justice. Industrial and technological advance, and even cultural progress, do not, *per se*, bring about social justice, though it might be argued that they constitute a starting point for its attainment. Faced with this predicament and confronted by necessary and progressive restrictions in the area of individual freedom in relation to physical and mental or planes both, keen and sensitive minds have realised that in this context the only field of freedom which is capable of being left intact is the freedom of the inner soul, the domain which is the primary concern of religion.

Thirdly, the fervent reliance on technology which was believed to be a panacea for all human ills, capable of ushering in a new era of limitless abundance and unalloyed happiness for the mankind on earth, but in itself quite neutral and innocuous, incapable of generating strife and hatred as the religion had done in the past, has belied these high hopes. In the year 1979 the main concern of sensitive human minds is not how to encourage continuous advancement in technology, but how to control the devastating consequences to which it can and may lead the mankind. The main problem today is not how to ensure further advancement in the use of the vast atomic power harnessable, but how to control it so as it does not result in the annihilation of mankind. Technology is no longer a harmless and beneficent power from the progress and advancement of which nothing but good can result to man. It is now seen as, one of the deadliest and most evil of forces that has ever been let loose upon earth in the history of mankind. As in the case of the *djinn* in the *Arabian Nights*, the best place for it was to lie corked up in the bottle at the bottom of the sea instead of being uncorked out in the open, and it will be an act of deep wisdom to cork it in again before consigning the magic bottle to the place from where it was unwittingly dragged out. The alternative progress of making "peaceful" uses of it, are fraught with dangers unlimited, till human nature itself is first transmuted and reintegrated. This has led the sensitive enquiring minds to cogitate that there must be some other set of values to which the values of science and technology must be subordinated and they have awakened to a growing realization that unless these values are discovered and truly comprehended, there are no means of saving mankind from almost certain annihilation.

There is another orientation of thought, now assuming shape in the disquietude filled human mind, which, though indirectly, is bound to lend support to a deep revival of human interest in religion and it is the modern philosophic outlook. Until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Philosophy was primarily concerned with attempts to devise a systematic schemata whereby all existence could be explained. Platonic idealism and Marxist materialism are the two polarities of this trend. In the beginning of the present century, there came about a sort of general agreement that these system-builders were wrong basically, for, it was argued, our knowledge can never become complete enough for there to be an all-embracing explanation of man and the universe. There, thus, grew up a school of philosophers who held that all metaphysical speculation rested on a basic error, an error which supposes that there can be true proposition about something which is over or beyond all experience, and that, therefore, the proper and legitimate task of philosophy is to analyse concepts of thought. The proper task of philosophy is logical analysis, they asserted. These logico-linguistics avoided discussing the problems such as those of 'freedom' and 'absolute values', without clearly realising that thus, by implication, they were making a metaphysical statement in so far that they seem to assert that these problems are unreal. If all propositions of metaphysics can be shown to be senseless by the method of *logical analysis* then what about the propositions of this logical analysis itself? No sooner this question was seriously raised its implications were nothing in being perceived. Wittgenstein (1889-1951) agrees that,

"The result of philosophy is not a number of 'philosophical propositions' but to make propositions clear,"

"My propositions are lucidatory in this way : he who understand finally recognises them as senseless, when he

has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak, throwaway the ladder after he has climbed onto .it). He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly. Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”<sup>4</sup>

This last sentence might well have been taken out of the sayings of a religious mystic. The result of this development of philosophic thought is that it is now conceded that metaphysics is the truest form of philosophical speculation, and that philosophical activity satisfies a genuine and basic hunger of human mind, the fundamental curiosity as to what is the nature of the man and the universe, how are they inter-related, and how this inter-relationship may best be adjusted. This last limb of this implicated concession brings man's mind straight into the fields of religion and the philosophical trend out of which this concession stems is favourable for and fertile to, the revival of a genuine and deep interest in religion.

These three main reasons and the fourth subsidiary reason that, there has come about an earnest search for a world-view which besides satisfying the highest and the deepest quest and curiosity of man is also capable of operating as a ferment for a peaceful advancement towards ever-growing prosperity and happiness of all the men on this earth, knit into a global society imbued with a variegated plural universal culture, that have fixed the human focus on religion today.

Apart from these four, there is yet another and fifth circumstances of a general and negative character which is more than likely to give a new stimulus to revival of a wide interest in religion. A new generation, grown accustomed to the achievements of science and technology, is more likely to be impressed with what science cannot do than what it can, and thus their minds will inevitably turn towards religion as of supreme interest.

The annihilation of distance and the consequent emergence of a defacto global society has made this earnest yearning of mankind at this moment of its history, not only urgent, for a religion which is available to all castes and colours, all races and nationalities, but also such a hope and yearning seems more capable of actual realisation today than it ever has been the case in the history of the world before.

In this context, an acquaintance with the outlines of the origin and history, doctrines and tenets of the Sikh religion is desirable, for this religion not only professes to be an oecumenical religion, available to all men without discrimination but also claims to be a modern religion capable of meeting with the deepest aspirations, the spiritual and secular needs of the mankind of to-day.

The fact that this religion was founded in the 15<sup>th</sup> century when the historical development towards annihilation of distance that has made possible the emergence of a human global society possible and imperative, that it was finalised in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the modern scientific outlook and activity assumed a definiteness and finitude, both of which factors have led to the rise of problems that have now resulted in the revival of interest in the religion as, perhaps, the only hope of mankind, may not be merely fortuitous or accidental.

1. *Travels and Adventures* by the Rev, Joseph Wolff, D.D., LL-D. London, 1837; p. 375.
2. *Religion and Science*, London 1935,
3. *mitthat nivi nanaka gun changiaian tatt.*
4. *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*

## CHAPTER II

### PHENOMENALITY OF SIKHISM

In the preceding chapter are named some reasons for man's retreat from religion during the last two centuries and to certain recent trends in the domains of Physical Sciences, the realities of political systems, and the dead ends into which analytico-linguistic philosophical speculations have reached, that tend to stimulate return towards religion.

Mental energy which this retreat from religion released in the West was primarily turned towards Natural Sciences, but the very methodology of these Sciences provided man with new tools for studying the history and phenomena of religion as such and the methods of approach and the results obtained thereby are likely to mould and influence the direction of this newly awakened interest. It was the German philosopher, Hegel, (1770-1831) who dominated the philosophical thought of the West during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His assumption that the essential nature of the movement of human thought resembled vertical crawling of a snake wherein the first movement constituted the *thesis*, and the second the *anti thesis*, the opposite of that assertion, and the third movement, the *synthesis*, in which both the first movements were amalgamated. Hegel saw this basic characteristic of human thought as the essential nature of all movement of Reality, whether physical or mental, and he built his metaphysical system and his interpretation of human history this wise. This methodology of speculation is still the basis of, what is called, the Materialistic interpretation of History, and the Communist systems of thought, currently dominating a large part of the political globe. It was Hegel who made the assumption, unwarranted as is now demonstrably clear, that an "Age of Magic" preceded the "Age of Religion". He asserted that in the History of mankind, there were periods when ancient and primitive human societies were preoccupied with 'magic' as their sole theory and activity of their understanding and adjustment in relation to the universe. Magic is a theory as well as a practice. The basic idea underlying the theory of magic is that the processes of Nature can be strictly controlled by man through spells and incantations. This theory is as old as the Vedas and is still held by the widespread tantrik practices in most parts of India. The practice of magic depends upon the way in which certain things are done and said, for a given desired purpose, by those who have the necessary knowledge and power to put the relevant supernatural force into effect. The specialist in this practice is the medicine man or the magician, equivalent to the *prohit* of the Vedic sacrifices. Sir James Frazer, in his famous book, *The Golden Bough*, and his other work, the *Worship of Nature* (1926) tries to uphold the theory that a time existed when man believed that they could coerce the forces of Nature to do what they wanted. He supposes that it was when this belief was no longer found as pragmatically sound that the Age of Religion dawned. Religion presupposes the existence of spiritual beings, external to man and the world around him and that it is these spiritual Being or beings who control men's affairs. These beings cannot be coerced or dictated to, and the proper method of approach towards them, therefore, is that of supplication and prayer. This is essentially the difference between magic and religion, that while magic is coercive and dictatorial, religion is supplicatory and propitiatory. Archaeological and sociological studies which have been conducted on a vast scale in the recent past, however, have yielded ample data to confirm the fact that magic is not related to religion chronologically, and that both existed simultaneously in ancient times, as they still do in modern times. The priest of religion, is not a lineal descendent of the magician, as Fraser had thought, nor is religion the sequel to ineffective magic. They are both distinct activities, and mostly simultaneous, in which man indulges to achieve similar or identical objectives.

Sir E.B. Tylor (1832-1917) in his great book, *Primitive Culture*, (1871) rested the entire structure of his history of religion on what he called, Animism. His theory was that animism was the essence of religion, the minimum definition of religion, as he called it, the final source from which the whole



paraphernalia of religion has developed. His argument was that from observation of such phenomena as dreams, trances and visions, man had transferred to the natural order, the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees and the rivers, a concept of animating spirits whereby these natural objects perform their functions in the universe like man and animals. In this way, as Sir James Fraser put it, the man had located “in every nook and hill, every tree and flower, every brook and river, every breeze that blew and every cloud that flaked with silvery white, the blue existence of Heaven,” a spirit such as he believed animated his own corporeal frame. From this notion, the man advanced to the stage, when eventually from these innumerable spirits, a polytheistic system of gods emerged which controlled the various departments of Nature. For instance, instead of a separate spirit for every tree, there was supposed and conceived a god of Woods in general, and similarly a god of the Wind with a distinct character and features. From this polytheism to strict monotheism is only a logical step.

Sir Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), a speculative philosopher, who has extended much influence on the thought of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, believed and argued that the idea of God and religion in general originated from the theory of ghosts and the practice of the worship of ancestors. He attempted to demonstrate that, “the root of every religion” was in the worship of ancestors, which ancestors after death, were believed to live in the form of ghosts and which later on were deified. Since these ancestors were regarded with awe and reverence during their life-time, they were apotheosized after their death, and consequently a complicated system of worship developed. This, he thought, was the whole story of religion.

This speculation was in line with the evolutionary thought which dominated the 19<sup>th</sup> century and this mode is still there in the popular mind and literature of today, although the evidence which has been painfully accumulated since, refuses to fit in with this theory of the origin of religion, as Andrew Lang in his book, *‘The Making of Religion’* (1898) was believed to have shown. There has been, as the irrefutable data now shows, no unilinear development from animism to polytheism and to Monotheism, or from illustrious mortals to deified Immortals.

The argument behind all such speculations was two-fold. (One), that there has been an evolution in religious thought i.e. that there were certain phases of religious thought which were chronologically anterior to certain other phases, and (two), that, therefore, these so-called later phases were superior and higher than the former phases, this being a postulate of the Theory of Evolution that the later in time is qualitatively superior to the earlier.

It is this kind of speculation and argument which has occupied the minds of intelligent men during the last one hundred years or so, in respect of religion, but it is now no longer dogmatically held that both or either of these two propositions is self evident or demonstrably true.

It is not correct that, in fact, certain phases of religious thought and practice, such as magic or ancestor-worship, preceded in the history of human society, the other phases. Viewed chronologically, they are often found to be simultaneous and they run along side by side with each other. Secondly, it is fallacious to argue that chronology is a spiral measure of value. To argue that because ancestor worship precedes polytheism, therefore, polytheism is a superior religious practice to ancestor-worship is a fallacious argument. That one is superior to or more excellent than the other, depends not upon whether its chronological origin is earlier or later. Its mode of assessment is quite different and it consists in a certain power of perception of quality, of evaluation, which forms the part of a properly developed trained and a cultured mind. To argue that the origin of a thing determines its value is the ‘naturalistic fallacy’. It is a fallacy which wrongly supposes that the value of a fact is dependent upon and is determined by its origin.

Whatever, therefore, may be the hang-over of these 19<sup>th</sup> century speculations and modes of approach in the popular mind of the uninformed, the intelligent minds have already perceived clearly that a true understanding and appraisal of religion can only be achieved through the interior religious experience itself and not through the discipline of other sciences and philosophy. This realisation has been made possible in the recent years, firstly by the analytical thought of logicians and

philosophers such as Dr. A.E. Moore who in his *Principia Ethica* clearly explains the nature and implications of what has been called the, 'naturalistic fallacy' and it was Dr. Otto who in his *The Idea of the Holy* (1928) clearly showed that the core of religious experience consisted of an awareness of non-moral holiness as a category of value, which was quite distinct from the aesthetic and the moral experiences. This category of value he called, as *numina* i.e. a spiritual experience of reality peculiar to religion. It is this numinous experience which is the core and base of religion and its ingredients, awe and reverential wonder around in a religiously sensitive mind in relation to his apprehension of himself and the universe around him.

This word, *numina*, is etymologically related to the Sanskrit word, *naman*, the English word, *name*. Its antonym is *phenomena*. 'Phenomena' is that which appears as reality to the sensory motor apprehension of man, precisely the subject matter of investigation of Physical Sciences. 'Numenon' is that which lies at the root of the phenomena and which causes and supports the phenomena but which is not discernible either through sensory motor apprehension or even through speculative processes grounded in the data of the sensory motor apprehension. "They are not these, but other eyes with which my Beloved may be seen," says Guru Nanak.<sup>1</sup> In other words, what the Physical Sciences investigate through observation and controlled experiment is all phenomena. The theories which the Physical scientist subsequently builds to explain the data which he thus collects is also phenomena-grounded. This data and these theories are both like-wise phenomenal and they, therefore, pertain to a category of reality which is not the subject matter of religion. The presupposition and the basic postulates of all great religions is that this, category of reality which the Sciences investigate into and speculate over, is illusory and not real and that the ultimate Reality is something which lies at the base of all phenomena, which is numenon about which the Hindu *Brihadarnyaka* (III. 2.12) says that when "a man dies, what does not forsake him, *najabiti*, is his numenon, *naman*." It is this that is meant when it is said that the ultimate Reality is a 'numenon' and that numenon alone endures. The numenon alone endures, as the essence of the purified soul, as the divine light in the heart of man, and as the God of the Universe. "Nanak (approves of him) who holds steadfast to this Testament of the Guru, while actively operative in the vista-scope of the phenomenal forms that the Numenon, as explicit in the Self-realised man; as the Light and Guide of mankind and as the God Almighty alone endures."<sup>2</sup>

The real subject matter of all true religious activity is the apprehension of or an attempt to establish contact with this numenon, and the true religion tempts the man with nothing less than the vision of this ultimate Reality. Put thus there is no real antagonism between Science and Religion as the religion implicates an activity which is independent of scientific activity and relates to a category of experience which is neither confirmed nor falsified by whatever the scientific discoveries or speculations may reveal or establish.

Sikhism is essentially, and more than anything else, the religion of the Numenon, and throughout the voluminous Sikh scripture, consisting of approximately 30,000 hymns, there are not many hymns Or pages of this Book where it is not asserted through repeated statements, literary similies and allusions, that the essence of true religious theory and practice is the Name : "There is nothing comparable to the Name in all religion."<sup>3</sup> The congregational Prayer of the Sikhs ends by fervently beseeching God to grant "progressive prevalence of the Religion of Name, preached by Nanak."<sup>4</sup>

It is in this context that the historical epiphany of Sikhism is of interest to the modern man.

Sikhism is not a history-grounded religion, i.e. the truth the validity of Sikhism does not depend upon any event that has occurred in History, as is the case with certain other religions. Islam, Christianity, and Judaism all maintain and proclaim that there is, in their possession, a special and unique self-revelation of God through their own divinely-appointed channels. It is a matter of history that the Nazarene Jew, who is claimed as the Christ of God, or Abul Kassim, who became, "The Praised One", Mohammed, and who is asserted as the prophet of Allah par excellence, or Moses to whom God spake directly through a burning bush, appear as historical individuals. If in

fact these special channels of the revelations of God did not exist in history as is claimed, and are only myths or fictions, then the whole basis of the claim of these religions, that their dogma carries its own validity with it, falters and falls to the ground. This is a point of strength in these religions in so far as it guarantees to them an element of psychological certitude and a historical continuity. But it is a weakness in so far as it binds these religions to a pre-determined interpretation of the reality. Thus, the Christian theologians would normally start with the postulate that there can be no advance on the Revelation, which is already fully given in the life and teaching of the Christ as the Son of God. The whole task of the Christian theologian is to render what has already been revealed, more explicit. The Muslim and Jewish theologians would proceed on similar lines in respect of their final terms of reference. Similarly, though in a somewhat different way, their Hindu counterparts in India, are circumscribed in respect of their final terms of reference in the form of the Veda, which though is not conceived of as a self-revealing living God in the Western sense, nevertheless is postulated as eternal and complete revelation of the final Truth. Sikhism, on the other hand, makes no such well-chiseled claim or any such draconic assertion. It merely asserts the following three simple, though fundamental propositions:

- (a) that the ultimate Reality is not comprehensible through the sensory-motor perceptions or pure speculations of thought.
- (b) that this ultimate Reality is continuous with and partakes of the religious experience of the numenon, which experience is the matrix of other values of Truth, Beauty and Good, and which experience is implicit in and inheres in the universal human religious consciousness.
- (c) that there is a way of cultivating and making explicit this consciousness of the numena such as leads to the vision of God.

The founders of the Sikh religion have merely asserted that there is technique and there is a discipline, which is called the *Practice of the Name*, in the Sikh scripture, which is more suitable and efficacious for achieving this vision of God than others in the present Age and in the current mental climate of mankind. There is no other claim which Sikhism makes and there is no other dogma which it asserts as basic to its teachings, and in a way, therefore, the time-point of the epiphany and the historical origin and growth of Sikhism is not strictly relevant to the truth or validity of Sikhism.

The epiphany and the history of Sikh faith, however, is of interest in an other respect. In recent years, in Europe, a School of thought has arisen which goes by the name of, Phenomenology, the study of the development of human consciousness and self-awareness itself in abstraction from any claims concerning existence. Its adherents seek to determine the meaning of what has happened in history on the presumption that all knowledge is phenomenon and all existence is phenomenal. They have adopted this term from Edmund Husserl (1859-1939) who inaugurated a philosophy which is passionately interested in the tiniest details of experience as providing a clue, to art, law, religion, history and all other aspects of the universe. Husserl insists that philosophy which he calls, Pure Phenomenology, is distinguished from all empirical sciences in its peculiar method, which though not easy to expound is a form of intuition concerned not with the appearance of facts but with their essences, forms or structures. These structures are not the perceived aspects of things or the ideas of them; they are obscurely akin to the *sambhogakaya* of the *Trikaya* doctrine of the Mahayana Buddhism; and the intuitive prehension of these accounts in the historical events and human experiences is stated as the true task of philosophy to be accomplished through an intricate process of phased perception, analysis and meditation; called, "presuppositionless method", an exposition which remains somewhat obscure even in the texts of Husserl's, *Ideas, General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1931 New York). When, however, this term, Phenomenology, is applied to the investigation of the structure and significance of religious phenomena, independently of its setting in a particular culture or at a particular time, it is used in a somewhat different sense from that of Husserl. The method employed is to collect material from all ages, states of culture and parts of the world without laying stress on chronology, environments, functions in society or validity. That what

appears, i.e. appears as a phenomena, is collected and correlated for the purpose of pure description without making any attempt to pass a judgement on it. Since God does not fall within the purview of the 'presuppositionless method' either as a subject or an object, a phenomenologist would describe it as beyond his scope of enquiry. This, he would say, is the business of theology and not philosophy, as his sole aim is to understand the religious fact as it appears to the religious man and as he reacts to it. It is, thus, a method of enquiry to assess the meaning and significance of religious phenomena, and Phenomenology, therefore, concerns itself with the study of the history of a religion for its material, postulating that this study of history of a religion is itself conditioned by the results of historical research and as such the inner religious experience and the outward manifestation of the phenomena are really complementary aspects of the same whole and discipline. It is on the basis of some such approach that Malnowsky, B., in his *Magic, Science and Religion and other Essays*, (Illinois, 1948) concedes that,

"the comparative science of religion compels us to recognise religion as the master force of human culture. Religion makes man do the biggest things he is capable of, and it does for man what nothing else can do; it gives him peace and happiness, harmony and sense of purpose; and it gives all this in an absolute form".

It is in this context that a bird's eye-view of the history of Sikhism is of special interest.

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak (1469-1539), who was born in that part of the Punjab which is now in Pakistan. His nine Successor-Nanaks, (1539-1708) exgetised, developed and applied to concrete socio-political situations, what Guru Nanak had revealed and taught and they thus tried to demonstrate what these teachings mean and amount to in the life of man as lived in an organised civilised society. These founders of Sikh religion are called, the *Gurus*, 'the Shafts of Light for guidance of mankind' <sup>5</sup> and it is the fundamental article of Sikh faith that all the ten Nanaks were, in fact, "one Light, one system which successively manifested itself in different corporeal frames." <sup>6</sup> The term, *guru*, in common parlance, signifies a teacher, a guide, but etymologically it has a deep and profound meaning. Bhai Mani Singh, the Martyr (*d.* 138) claims that it was the last Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, himself (1666-1708) who taught him that the meaning of the word, *guru* is as follows : "go means, inertia, matter, nescience. Ru means, the principle of light which illumines consciousness." *Guru*, therefore, means nothing less than the Divine Light implicit in every human heart progressively revealed to him through a proper cultivation of his religious intuition. The historical Sikh Gurus claim no more than that they can help man, through teaching, to cultivate this religious intuition so as to awaken the Divine Light within. The, last Sikh Guru, sternly proclaimed that, in all the Sikh Gurus it was the same Light and the identical Spirit that historically and successively manifested itself and that although the mortal frames changed the identity of the Spirit and the Light remained intact. After the tenth Guru, this Light has been deposited in the Sikh Scripture, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, and the Spirit continues to operate in the historically permanent Mystic Body of the committed Sikhs, the Holy Congregation of those who follow this Light. This is the Sikh doctrine of the Condominium of the *Granth* and the *Panth*.

This is, in short, the whole essence of Sikh History.

Guru Nanak was born on April 15, 1469, in the war-like *kshatrya* clan of Hindus in the village of Talwandi, now called Nankana Sahib, the holy birthplace of Nanak, about 40 miles to the south-west of Lahore in Pakistan. His father was a Village Accountant, and at the age of seven Nanak was put to the village school from where he learnt three Rs. Islam, as a political force, had already entrenched itself in the whole of northern India for the last four centuries and Islamic culture and religious lore was already a part of the ethos of the people of this region. A considerable number of Hindus had been converted to Islam already, either through the sword and political coercion or by pragmatic choice, and the father of Guru Nanak engaged a Muslim teacher to teach his son Persian and Islamic literature, the knowledge of which had a direct politico-economic value, Nanak supplemented these rudiments of education thus acquired by travel and self-study and by association with the learned men of all schools of thought, Hindu and Islamic both not only in the

whole of India but in the entire Middle East i.e. Arabic Mesopotamia and Afghanistan. Thus he became a truly learned and cultured man, as is evident from his revelations now preserved in the Sikh scripture, the *Guru Granth*. His hymns and compositions, revealed pronouncements and spiritual statements, are replete with literary allusions, sophisticated and subtle references to ancient writers and classics of both Hindus and Muslims and all his poetic revelations are characterised by a rich acquaintance with literary conventions and styles of his times and are permeated with deep learning and astonishing common sense. He, however, was careful to assert and explain that the validity of what he testified in the form of spiritual revelations was not dependent upon any source or matrix outside his own interior and authentic experience through which God Himself had confronted and communicated with him. This is the true justification of Guru Nanak being the Founder of Sikh religion, namely, that he claimed that God had directly, without any intercession, revealed Himself to him, that what he spoke was directly from God Himself, unalloyed and undistorted. It was in the years A.D. 1496, when Guru Nanak was 27 years old, that he had the unique experience of having a full and direct vision of God when he perceived that he stood before the Throne of the Almighty and received from Him the commission to preach the new religion for the coming Age, the Religion of the Name.

Guru Nanak is the first prophet ever born in the long and rich spiritual history of India. Before him there had arisen in this great land of spiritualism seers and inspired teachers of religion, the rishis who sensed and grasped the eternal sounds, *shruti*, coeval with the original act of creation, and acaryas who exegetised upon and decoded these 'eternal sounds'. On this anonymous and amorphous mystical phenomena and its decodation the entire grand superstructure of Hinduism and Hindu spiritual deposit rests. A direct confrontation between God and man for the purpose of revealing a new religion for the guidance of mankind is not there in Hinduism.. Even in the semitic traditions of inspired declaration of divine will and purpose, that is in Judaism and Islam, the communication between God and man is indirect, through the veil of 'burning bush' or the angel, Gabriel, and in Christianity, it is the 'word made flesh', wherein there is merely manifestation, but no communication based on encounter between man and God. "What is important in mysticism is that *something happens*. What is important in a prophetic act is that something is said." <sup>7</sup>

Guru Nanak spent the rest of his life in travelling and teaching throughout India, and in the Middle East, and during the closing years of his life he settled as a farmer in a newly set up community-centre, called, Kartarpur founded on the banks of Ravi now left in Pakistan. After appointing his successor, Guru Angad (1505-1552), Guru Nanak left his mortal frame and it became a matter of dispute between the Hindus and the Muslims as to which parochial community the Guru truly belonged, for, his message was perceived to be such that both claimed it as the very essence of their own. Guru Angad was followed by Guru Amar Das (1479-1574), both of whom continued preaching the message of Guru Nanak and applying the Sikh teaching to the social contexts of their day. It was Guru Angad who gave a definitive distinction to the teachings of Guru Nanak and got them recorded in a special modified and perfected script of ancient origin, called, Gurumukhi. It was Guru Amar Dass who developed the institution of common dining, which in the social context of duplex Hindu Muslim social complex of India, meant a profound social revolution of such dimensions that it shook the very foundations of the Hindu caste system and Muslim social arrogance. Guru Amar Dass not only took his truly revolutionary step of attacking and anaesthetizing the hell-heaven roots of Hindu caste, but he also took some other seismic steps that laid firm foundations for the Sikh oecumenical church and brought about fundamental transformations in the social structure of religion and cartography of religious consciousness, for the first time in the religious history of mankind. He enlarged upon the doctrine already laid down by Guru Nanak, that unaided human reason was altogether incompetent to provide true guidance to man on matters of his existential situation and soteriological destiny <sup>8</sup> and that extraterrestrial revelation was his only and ultimate hope. <sup>9</sup> He expounded the basic doctrine of Sikh dogmatics that this Revelation was the exclusive altar of prayerful homage for man and it was to be deemed as

distinct from religion itself, the former being the God's self-revelation to man, while the latter is the product of human culture and aspirations, not to be identified with saving revelation, as salvation can only come from God and not from man. He clarified that this Revelation descends exclusively on a human individual, who is 'more than man', the Guru,<sup>10</sup> and not on a pretender or a false claimant, no matter how clever and gifted.<sup>11</sup> He pin-pointed that Revelation was the Guru's Word, *gur-sabd*, *gurbani*, distinguishing it from all other human or non-human literary creations and compositions.<sup>12</sup> Through his lengthy poesy, *Anand*, he gave a new dimension to the highest conceptualisation achieved by mankind about the penultimate characteristics of the ultimate Reality. *Sat*, *Cit*, *anand*, Being, Consciousness, and Bliss have been held as the coeval marks of the ultimate Reality and *anand*, Bliss has been variously identified with the *turiya*, the dreamless sleep *nirbijasamadhi*, the seedless Trance, the *sunya*, utter Emptiness of higher Meditation, or the *yab-yum*, *maithuna*, of tantric yoga in the profound developments of Hindu metaphysical thought. Guru Amar Dass rejected firmly all these identificatory speculations as misconceived<sup>13</sup> and declared that the Point of Contact between the Man and God, as conceived by Sikhism, was true *anand*, the heart-component of the ultimate Reality. Again Guru Amar Dass mapped out the blue-print of organisation of Sikhism as a World Religion by appointing twenty two Sikh bishops over as many bishoprics coterminus with the temporal Mughal Indian empire.<sup>14</sup> Further, Guru Amar Dass, by appointing some women bishops as well, for the first time in the history of organised, or ordained religions and ministries of the world, conceded the right of men and women both, to preach and supervise religious preaching, on equal footing. Guru Amar Dass condemned and forbade the institutionalised coercive custom of suttee<sup>15</sup>, immolation of a widow on the burning pyre of her husband to demonstrate the deathless, seamless union between the partners in a marriage that emboldened and encouraged the Great Mughal emperor Akbar to outlaw the practice of Suttee through secular law; and Guru Amar Dass it was who declared the ancient Hindu system of dowry publicly displayed<sup>16</sup> at the bride's marriage to mark her final and absolute disinheritance from her share in ancestral property, the true implications of which religious declaration were conceded on the secular plane in India, for the first time, by the Hindu Succession Act of 1954. He was succeeded by Guru Ram Dass (1534-1581) who founded the central temple of the Sikh faith at Amritsar. Guru Arjan (1563-1606) was the fifth Sikh Guru who not only completed the construction of the central Sikh temple at Amritsar but also collected, compiled and edited the hymns and revelations of the predecessor Sikh Gurus as well as of certain contemporary men of religious perception, thus creating the Sikh Bible, called the *Adi Granth*. The human compositions and pious compositions of a large number of low and high caste Hindus and Muslims, contemporary and near contemporary were purposely included to provide a back-drop of pre-dawn spiritual awakening generally that heralded the epiphany of the Light of Sikhism and its relevance to the Sikhism was particularised so as to make Sikhism more fully comprehensible to men. It was this *Adi Granth* to which certain additions and slight alterations of arrangement were made by the last Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh in 1706 and which was then invested with the status of the *Guru Granth* i.e. the Revealed Spirit of the Gurus.

All through this time, however, a fundamental change had occurred on the Indian political scene.

Islam as founded by Ubul-Kassim, "Mohammed" the Praised One, had already become the State religion of Arabia by 636 AD when Mohammed was 60 years of age. Not long after, the desert Muslim tribes, had spread Islam from India to Spain, and Egypt, Syria, Asia minor, North Africa, Gibraltar Peninsula and Constantinople fell before the advance of Muslim ecclesiastical empire. It was in AD. 1732 that this tide was stemmed, when Charles Mortel of France gained "the great victory" over the Arabs at Tours and thus saved Western Europe for Christianity. In their advance, the Muslim peoples had unwittingly lent strength to the Roman Papacy by destroying the Patriarchates of Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch as well as by the removal of the Bishop of Carthage and by weakening the Patriarchate at Constantinople. As this religious empire of Islam

spread, ancient languages were obliterated, ancient cultures were persecuted and extirpated and beautiful mosques, dream court-yards and palaces, Granada and Seville in Spain, to Badshahi Masjid at Delhi and Taj Mahal at Agra sprang in the wake. The learning and Sciences of these advancing Muslims were far superior to those of the Europeans and so far as culture and Science are concerned, therefore, it is legitimate to opine that the view taken of the “Great Victory” at Tours is more patriotic than of benefit to culture and civilisation. Even in the sphere of religion, the element of greatness in the victory of Tours can only be discerned through a finely grounded parochial microscope, for Islam, after all is essentially the proclamation of the heresy of the Christian bishop. Arius who, in the 4th century AD., propounded the doctrine that, “there is no God but God,” implying that Jesus, the Christ was a human figure, “a creature ex nihilo, and not God-incarnate. The rival opponent of bishop Arius, Athanasius, led the opposition to this Christian theological doctrine at the Oecumencial Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. and Arius lost by a rather small number of votes, in favour of the Logos doctrine that God and Christ were one. The victory of Tours merely fortified and perpetuated the prevalence of the Athanasius orthodoxy in the Christian religion, and no more. This all-consuming and all-absorbent tide of Islam was stemmed in India, near the mouth of Indus for 300 years, but it made a fresh onslaught in the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century through the Khyber and Bolan passes of the Hinduksh range of mountains which means, “the Hindus’ Frontier, (and *not Hindukush*, meaning ‘Slaughterer of the Hindus’), till it secured a permanent footing at Delhi, which literally means, “the Threshold of Hindu Sanctorum”, by the dawn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, by the coming in of the Mughals, when Sikhism made its debut. The Hindus of northern India, led and inspired by the great Rana Sanga of Mewar, made a last bid to remove the heavy foothold of Islam from the Threshold of Hindu Sanctorum through the subtle strategy of inviting the Mongol adventurer, Babur from Central Asia who defeated the Pathan King of Delhi Ibrahim the Lodhi, at Panipat in 1526 A.D. But the next move of Rana Sanga to expel these Mongol predators from the threshold of the Hindudom failed at the battle of Kanuha on March 17, 1527, when two hundred thousand Hindu braves melted away from the battlefield to leave, it in the hands of mere thirty thousand Central Asian Mongols under Zahirud Din, the Babur, and thus the Mughal Empire was firmly established in India. Guru Nanak was an eye-witness of this invasion of Babur, the Mongol, and has made pungent, poignant references to the sufferings and misfortunes of the people of north India this invasion caused. History has confirmed his judgement that the conquest of India by the Mughals in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was “a marriage imposed by the forces of Evil and Inequity and solemnised by the Devil.”<sup>17</sup> India had a civilization, a culture, as ancient as any in the world and its peculiar set of values, enshrined in the Hindu concepts, traditions and institutions of *Dharma*, *Karma*, *Samsra* and *Maya* were not only peculiar but possessed a vigour and a perennial character which has withstood and survived the greatest, cruelest, and severest onslaught that any culture has had to face in the history of mankind, namely, the onslaught of political Islam. The first four Sikh Gurus were the contemporaries of the Mughal Emperors, Babur (1483-1530), Hamayun (1508-1556) and Akbar (1542-1605) and although the revolutionary religion which they founded and the social transformations they brought about did not fail to attract governmental attention, no serious clash occurred between the new religion and the civil government, which was, in theory, an Islamic theocratic government, sometimes taking its vocation seriously and at other times being more practical than fanatical. Akbar, the Great, tried to modify and dilute the theories and practices of political Islam both as respects the governance of India, which was and has remained essentially a non-Mohammendan country, but the guardian-angels of Islam called, the *Ulema*, regarded these trends with frank-disfavour, considering them as tantamount to disavowal of the certitudes of Islam, meriting perdition in this world as well as the next, and they held any compromise, no matter how statesman-like, as despicable weakness, and mere secular politics as an affront to the penultimate viceregent of God, Mohammed, and his followers. The statesmanship of Akbar, which duly recognised that the political theories and institutes of Islam which are essentially the constituents of a preponderantly Muslim society, are inapplicable to India, was openly ridiculed



by them as despicable apostasy and their chagrin at their failure to persuade Akbar to play the role of a Muslim fanatical monarch was only matched by their despair at their own political ineffectiveness. It was at this time, that in the year 1559, that a person later known as, *Sheikh Sirhindi*, was born in an immigrant Muslim family at Sirhind, meaning, 'the Apex of India', the military cantonment of north Western India of those days. He grew up into a fanatical Muslim theologian, and in his thirties he declared that he had been appointed by God as the Paraclete of God, i.e. the Holy Ghost, commissioned to regenerate and renew Islam. He assumed the grandiose title of, *Mujaddid Alif Thani*, that is, the regenerator of the religion in the second millennium. This man lived up to the age of 63 and died at Sirhind in the year 1624 A.D. at the same age at which Mohammad had died, and his last admonition to his followers, on his death bed was, "*hold shariat*, (i.e. the politico-social dogma of Islam), tight with your teeth." Pretending to follow the footsteps of his Master, the prophet Mohammed, he engaged in proclaiming his ideas and his interpretation of Islam to politically powerful persons around him, and the largest number of letters which he wrote during his life time, now collected and published under the title of *Muktubati-Imami-Rabbali*,<sup>18</sup> were addressed to a Mughal grandee, Sheikh Farid Bhukhari. This Sheikh Farid Bhukhari had early distinguished himself in warfare against the Afghans in Orissa and he had been promoted to the command of '1500 Horses' during the reign of Akbar. He was also appointed as *Mir Bakhsbi*, the Imperial Accountant General, under Akbar and for a time he also held charge of the *daftari-tan*, Excise and Revenue, in the Imperial Government. Akbar had also conferred upon him the grand title of, *Sahibul saif-val-qalam*, meaning, the Master of the Pen and the Sword. Akbar died in AD. 1605 and. Jehangir, his son, ascended the Imperial throne. Father Du Jarrie in his book "Akbar and the Jesuits"<sup>19</sup> (page 204) tells us that

"Accordingly, the leading noble, Sheikh Farid Bhukhari, having been sent by the others as their representative came to the Prince (Salim, entitled, Jehangir), and promised in their names to place the Kingdom (of India) in his hands provided that he would swear to defend the law of Mohammed."

V.A. Smith in his, Akbar, (page 322), and Sri Ram Sharma in his, "*Religious Policy of Mughal Emperors*" (page 71), confirm that a promise had been extracted from Jehangir before he was helped to ascend the throne, to defend Islam, which in practice means to make political Islam prevail with the aid of the sharp edge of the sword. In the 8<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Jehangir, his son, Khusrao, a person of cultured disposition and tolerant religious views, was forced to flee for his life, from the Islamic arm of the state. This flight for freedom of prince Khusrao, was described as rebellion in the political parlance and Khusrao was pursued by the Imperial hosts to be captured and liquidated. Sheikh Farid Bhukhari, 'the Master of the Pen and Sword', rendered conspicuous services in the capture and liquidation of the royal prince and thus he earned the title of *Murtaza Khan*, a military rank, for his services to the Imperial throne. His rank was increased to the command of '6,000 Horses', according to the *Tozaki-Jehangiri*.

Guru Arjun, in the *Adi Granth* had made the uncompromising declaration that the political Islam which seeks to destroy and extirpate ancient languages and cultures, civilization and peoples with their own ways of life, was wholly unacceptable to the people of India, i.e. non-Muslims adding that "coercive rule of one people over another was against the God's Will as now revealed to mankind through Sikhism, and all governments, henceforth, may exercise power, through persuasion and mutual consent and not otherwise."<sup>20</sup> Sikhism, being the defender of the oppressed Hindus and as the entelechy of the spirit of man had, Guru Arjun declared, no quarrel with Islam as a religion, a way and technique of man's relationship with God, but it stoutly refused to accept the Arabic socio-political pattern of life, based on the ethnical norms of Muslim rulers. The Revelation in the Sikh scripture contained the call that,

"Let a Muslim be compassionate in heart. Let his Islam consist of cleansing the impurities of his soul. But he must not confuse his religion with a desire to dominate and subjugate others. Such a Muslim only we accept as worthy and as socially pure."<sup>21</sup>



Prince Khusrao, apparently agreed with the justice of this demand and he held the Guru in great esteem otherwise also on account of his spiritual eminence. In his flight from the hosts of Jehangir, the Prince crossed the river Beas at the ford of Goindwal which was then the seat of Guru Arjun. Guru Arjun, well aware of the consequences it might entail, succored the unfortunate prince by providing his companions with meals and with words of spiritual consolation, and Jehangir made this a pretext for passing a 'death sentence with severe tortures' on the Guru according to the barbaric Mongol laws of the *Yasa*. He admits in his, *Tozuke*, that 'eversince his ascendance to the throne it had been his intention either to force Guru Arjan to accept conversion to Islam, or to punish him with death, as the Guru was preaching a religion which was growing popular amongst "simple minded Hindus" and "foolish Muslims". It was Sheikh Farid Bhukhari, the *Murtaza Khan* to whom Jehangir handed over the person of Guru Arjun, "to be destroyed by killing him with severe tortures, in accordance with the Mongol law of the *Yasa*". It was this *Murtaza Khan* to whom *Sheikh Sirhindi*, the *Mujaddid Alif Thani* had jubilantly written that the accession of Jehangir to the throne "was auspicious for Islam in India". In another communication this 'Regenerator of Islam' perorated to the *Murtaza Khan* saying:

"Now when the Emperor has got no sympathies with the non-Muslims, *karus*, the prevalence of heretical practices which were introduced in the past is very loathsome to Muslims. It is the duty of every Muslim that the Emperor should be informed of the evils of the rites of the unbelievers and all the believers should make efforts to remove these evils because it is just possible that the Emperor may not know the evils of heretical innovations."

This 'Regenerator of Islam in the Second Millennium', paid several visits to Sheikh Farid Bhukhair, the *Murtaza Khan*, at the imperial court of Jehangir and his proclamations and numerous letters <sup>24</sup> make no secret of his dynamic hatred against non-Sunni Muslims in general and non-Muslims in particular, and it is clear that he had no sympathy whatever with anyone outside the orthodox Sunni fold of Islam, and he regarded tolerance as a tacit compliment to evil and heresy. It is the rise and growth of Sikh religion and the activities of the Sikh Gurus tending to convert and encompass the intelligent and sincere minority of the Hindus and Muslims both, which particularly disturbed the afflated soul of the 'Regenerator' and it is, therefore, Sikhism, the 'heretical innovation', which he particularly desired the Emperor to destroy and which desire the emperor, later on, himself owns as his long cherished aim, in the *Tozike*, when justifying his handing out of death sentence on Guru Arjun. In another letter <sup>25</sup> written to a Mughal grandee, Jehangir Kuli Khan, alias, Lalla Beg, a Commander of 4,000 Horse' the *Mujaddid* gave out the order that:

"If from the very start of the reign (of Emperor Jehangir) Islam gets a footing and the Muslims establish their prestige, well and good, but if the matter is delayed the task (of restoring political Islam in India) will become very difficult."

This Lalla Beg was another fanatical follower of 'the Regenerator' and he and the *Murtaza Khan* were his two chief agents for the purpose of employing the Imperial power to destroy Sikhism so that, "Islam gets a footing," in India. It was without doubt, this *Sheikh Sirhind*, the Regenerator of Islam in the Second Millennium. who, through Sheikh Farid Bhukhari, the *Murtaza Khan* and the *Lalla Beg* had extracted a promise from Prince Salim, who later became the Emperor Jehangir, that the Emperor would suppress the Sikhs and liquidate Sikhism by destroying Guru Arjun, and it is to this promise that Jehangir makes a cryptic reference in his *Memoirs*, the *Tozake*. It was in execution of this promise that Guru Arjun was put to death with tortures on a framed-up pretext, under the orders of Jehangir in the year 1606 and it was in pursuance of the politico-Islamic policy, embodied in the oft-proclaimed dictum by the *Mujaddid*, *ash-shara 'tabatus-saiyaf* that is, that Islam enjoins that its politico-social system must be enforced through sword on all peoples who fall under the subjugation of Muslims. Islam had come to India as a divisive and destructive influence from the eleventh century onwards, but the Mughal period had begun by striking a note of integration, a tendency towards mutual understanding and unification to replace bitterness and hatred with political and cultural cooperation. This political climate of harmony continued, in a conspicuous form, under

Babur, Sher Shah, Humayun and Akbar, but the moment was deliberately reversed under Jehangir on account of the powerful influence of the *Mujaddid*, and the intolerance of the Mughal Emperor, thereafter mounted with their growing decrepitude. From now onwards, the Sikh religion and; the political Islam in India engaged in a life and death struggle and the issue involved was no less than the right of independent spiritual values and traditions to survive. After a bitter struggle for a century and a half, Sikhism succeeded in inflicting a final defeat on the pretensions and arrogance of political Islam in its aims of destroying the culture and spiritual values of the politically defeated. The story of this struggle, in which the Sikh Gurus, from Guru Arjun onwards, guided and presided over Sikhism, and the Muslim *ulemas* inspired and directed the political Islam, is somewhat obscure but one of the most significant episodes of the history of the mankind, pregnant with immeasurable consequences for the future.

The Sixth Nanak, Guru Hargobind (1595-1645) in compliance with the directive and will of the Fifth Nanak brought about conspicuous change in the character of the Sikh movement by claiming for the Sikh people the status of spiritual-cum-secular sovereignty in relation to all secular authority by giving currency to and legitimising the concepts of the “rightful sovereign”, *sacca padishah*, “governance”, *raj*, “seat of government”, *takht*, “Privy Council Hall of the State”, *darbar*, as structural ideas of Sikh movement, and he established the custom of “sitting in state”, wearing two swords, the emblems of unicentral spiritual and temporal sovereignty . When the Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, ordained the Order of the Khalsa, in 1699, pledged to make every sacrifice to ensure the prevalence of Sikhism and its growth into a Global Brotherhood of Man, it was this emblem of Two-Swords, the Double-edged Disintegrator, *Khanda*, which became the central object of the Mystery of Initiation for the members of the Order. These activities of the Sixth Nanak did not escape the notice of the *Mujaddid*, it seems, for the Emperor, on being apprised of “the evils of these acts of the unbelievers”, ordered that Guru Hargobind be incarcerated as a political prisoner in the fort of Gwalior during the pleasure of His Majesty. It was more than likely that the Guru Hargobind would have either ended his whole life in prison, or more likely still, he might have been beheaded for the “offence” of refusing to accept Islam, an offence of which, in a truly Islamic state, if not every non-Muslim, at least every non-Jew and non-Christian, outside the narrow confines of the “People of the Book”, is always and continuously guilty. But, precisely at this period, another development took place. Blood-thirsty *Mujaddid*, through his pet Mughal grandees, the *Murtaza Khan* and the *Lalla Beg*, made Jehangir order the execution of a highly learned Muslim theologian on the sole ground that he was not of the orthodox Sunni sect, but was a Shia, a ‘heretic’, and therefore, deserved to die. *Rauzelatut Qayyumieh*, the Arabic document of the *Mujaddid* cult informs us that the sole offence of this condemned Muslim theologian, Qazi Nurullah, was that he had written an Arabic polemic, *Ahavalul-Haque* (1273 A.H.), in which the author had the temerity to argue that the Shia doctrine was the true Islamic doctrine. Qazi Nurullah, who was a Persian, Irani, a native of Shuster, Tehran, paid with his life for a similar “offence” for which Guru Arjun had been tortured to death and the accusing finger in both the cases was that of the *Mujaddid*. And the *Mujaddid* had become very powerful and influential in the state by now, from behind the scene, and on this very account he suffered a setback. As a contemporary Persian document <sup>26</sup> records, during this period, the *Mujaddid* paid numerous visits to the Murtaza Khan and was also summoned to Agra by Jehangir for consultations in matters of State policy. But the execution of Qazi Nurullah of Shuster made the powerful Asaf Khan, the brother of the Imperial Consort, Nurjahan, an enemy of the *Mujaddid*, and Asaf Khan was, at this time, the Prime Minister of the Empire. Asaf Khan warned Jehangir that the *Mujaddid* had gained such powerful influence with the soldiers that he had become a danger to the State. The apprehension was well founded. Jehangir records in his *Tozuk* that the *Mujaddid* was ‘very adversely reported to him’ and that, therefore, the Emperor handed him over to Anirai Singh, *Dalan*, to be imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior, where the Sixth Nanak, Guru Hagobind, had been previously incarcerated, and since Guru Hargobind had fallen under displeasure because of the instigation of the *Mujaddid*, when the *Mujaddid* came under displeasure, the Guru was released. An

old Persian manuscript<sup>27</sup>, however, tells us that this Imperial displeasure was only temporary and the *Mujaddid* was soon rehabilitated to be accepted once again as a special advisor to the Emperor for many years to come. Soon after this release of the Guru from the Fort-prison, however, the *Lalla Beg*, on his own authority, or more correctly, on the authority of Political Islam as expounded by his mentor, the *Mujaddid*, suddenly attacked the Guru with a formidable force of ten thousand horsemen in 1681 at the place now commemorated as the *Gurusar* in the Ferozepur district of the Indian Punjab, with the object of destroying the Guru, whose existence was “very loathsome to Muslims”, but *Lalla Beg* himself became a casualty on the battle-field along with five thousands of his seasoned soldiers. Jehangir had been succeeded by Emperor Shahjahan by this time. As the Sikh Guru thus asserted the true character of Sikhism more and more visibly, the political Islam represented by the *Mujaddid* and with the Mughal Emperors as its spear-head, grew more and more relentless in its determination to destroy this new world-religion. The Seventh Nanak, Guru Har Rai (1630-1661) and the Eighth Nanak, Guru Hari Krishan (1656-1664), were subjected to persistent unwelcome attention of the Mughal Emperors and concerted attempts were made to encourage schism and deviation, confusion and corruption in the basic trends of the Sikh movement, hoping that where the dagger had failed, the poison might work, and the Seventh and the Eighth Nanaks, therefore, had to concentrate on consolidating and amplifying the spiritual reservoir of Sikhism through expansion of proselytizing activities. The Seventh Nanak, Guru Har Rai, maintained twenty two hundred horsemen soldiers as his body guard entourage avoiding military clash with the civil authorities. But during the war of succession, after the deposition of Emperor Shah Jehan, the builder of the Taj, a rival brother of Aurangzeb, when pursued by the latter’s forces, fled to the seat of the Guru and requested the Guru to prevent his being captured. This fugitive Prince Dara Shikoh, was a well educated and well read Muslim and he, was also an admirer of Sikhism, in which he recognised the syndrome of a higher religion capable of bridging the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims in terms that all good men could accept, and thus he was out of sympathy with the political Islam of the *ulema*, of which, bigoted Aurangzeb was a strong proponent. Guru Har Rai deployed his body-guard horsemen to hold the passage of the Ford against the pursuing army of Aurangzeb until the refugee Prince escaped, and this Aurangzeb never forgot or forgave, even if he could forget this heroic challenge of Sikhism to the mighty political Islam. As soon as he was secure on his throne, after murdering his three brothers and putting his royal father in prison, he summoned the Guru to his presence. The Guru, relying on his rights as a sovereign in his own rights, sent his eldest son, Ram Rai, as his emissary to the Imperial court, and when Ram Rai exegetised a line in the Revelations of Guru Nanak, by giving a diplomatic twist to just one word, so as not to annoy the Emperor, the Guru publicly disowned his emissary-son and recalled him, whereupon Aurangzeb conferred upon the latter the freehold of the whole valley of Dehradun in the Himalayas, with the object of fostering schism in the Sikh movement. When the Eighth Nanak, Hari Krishan became the Guru, he was only six years old, physically, but his mental age was that of a fully matured and spiritually evolved man. He refused to obey the summons of Aurangzeb to present himself in the Imperial court. The Emperor tried to seize his person, while he was staying at the bungalow of Raja Jai Singh Swai, the Commander-in-Chief of the royal forces at Delhi. But the Guru had high fever and infectious pox which caused his demise.

Khwaja Mohammed Ma’soom, (1007-1079 A.H.) was the third son of the *Sheikh Sirhindi*, the Paraclete and it was this Ma’soom who succeeded the Regenerator of the Second Millennium. At the death of his father, Khawaja Ma’soom continued the policy of his illustrious father with a remarkable vigour, and he maintained and continued a prolific correspondence with men of eminence in the State and society. He wrote letters even to rulers outside India, such as the ruler of Bulkh, in Central Asia, and as the writer of *the Rauzatul-Qayyumi*<sup>28</sup>, a detailed compilation on the lives and miracles of *Sheikh Sirhindi* and his three immediate successors, testifies, Aurangzeb, as a Prince, became the disciple of Khawaja Ma’soom. After his accession to the throne, the Emperor expressed a wish for initiation into the mysteries of Islamic Sufism by the Khwaja Ma’soom, but

since the latter had become too old by then he sent his son, Khwaja Mohammed Saifuddin (1044-1096 A.H.) for the spiritual illumination of the Emperor to Delhi, and Khwaja Mohammed Saifuddin remained in constant attendance on Aurangzeb throughout his long military campaigns in Deccan. The letters written by Khwaja Mohammed Saifuddin are collected in the publication called *Maktubat-Ma'soomiyeh*, (Amritsar, 1908). It includes a letter, (No. 221), sent by Emperor Aurangzeb to Khwaja Mohammed Ma'soom expressing his gratitude for "the favour" that is, for sending Khwaja Mohammed Saifuddin to instruct Aurangzeb in the mystical lore of Islam. Saifuddin kept his father informed about the spiritual progress made by the Emperor, and besides the Emperor himself maintained a regular correspondence with Khwaja Mohammed Ma'soom. A perusal of this correspondence makes an illuminating reading and throws, hitherto un-suspected light on the true nature of the dynamics of the Muslim history in India in relation to the Sikh movement. Emperor Aurangzeb regularly consulted Khawaja Ma'soom on points of Muslim Theology in its particular relevance to his State policies. It would appear that, Khwaja Ma'soom was well satisfied with the avowed anti-Hindu, State policy of Aurangzeb. In letter No.6, in the *Maktubati Ma'soomiyeh*, the reverend Khwaja informs the Emperor that,

"This humble faqir offers his respects and expresses his gratitude for the glory of Islam and the stability of Islamic Principles (resulting from the policy of the Emperor). He always prays to God for long life, prosperity, and his all-round success as he has had a deep attachment and close association with him, the Emperor, for a long time past."

A modern Muslim scholar, Dr. Mohammed Yasmin, M.A., Ph.D. of Lucknow University, in his recent publication (Lucknow, 1958) *A Social History of Islamic India*, truly says (p. 171) that,

"It will not be an exaggeration to say that Aurangzeb's State policy was prompted by the voice of the *Sirhindi* from behind the scene."

The same scholar endorses, our conclusions regarding the martyrdom of the Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjun, when he says (p. 157) that,

"Occasional outbursts of bigotry on the part of Jehangir and his anti-Hindu sentiments may ultimately be traced to the influence of the *Mujaddid* on the fickle minded Emperor."

Aurangzeb, according to the contemporary records, (*Ma'assari Alamgiri*, Urdu, page, 54), issued a general ukase to his Provincial Governors, in A.D. 1699 that all the temples and teaching seminaries of the non-Muslims should be demolished and forcibly closed. As the news of this fresh onslaught of political Islam, on the Hindus and the Sikhs both, reached the Ninth Nanak, Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675), while he was touring and preaching in Assam, the Guru, thereupon returned to the north-western India posthaste, and went about from place to place, encouraging and heartening people, asking them to organise and resist this imperial tyranny. It was, there is little doubt, under the influence and at the suggestion and instigation of Khwaja Mohammed Ma'soom that Aurangzeb decided upon the death and destruction of Guru Tegh Bahadur, and, accordingly, the Guru was arrested, and on his refusal to become a Mohammedan, was put to death on the forenoon of the 11<sup>th</sup> November, in the year of 1675, in front of the Mughal Police Station of old Delhi, where now the memorial Gurdwara of Sis Ganj stands. The Jesuit Father, Manuci Niccolao,<sup>29</sup> tells us that the last words of Aurangzeb at his death bed were,

"I die happy, for at least the world will be able to say that I have employed every effort to destroy the enemies of Mohammedan Faith."

It may be reasonably surmised that, the Emperor had the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, in particular, in his mind besides other things, at his last hours on earth, firmly believing that by ordering the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur and by persecuting the Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, he had committed a deed of such high merit as will ensure his reception in the Paradise of Mohammed as promised in the Koran to those who engage themselves in fighting the opponents of the Faith, as well as memorable niche in the World history, which to his closed mind merely meant the history of political Islam.

When Guru Tegh Bahadur was publicly beheaded in the Silvery Esplanade, *the Chandni Chowk*,

of the Mughal Delhi on the eleventh of November, 1675, on his refusal to accept Islam to save his life, his son who then became the Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, was only nine years' old. In his unfinished Autobiography, called, 'This life is Wonderful', *Bachitranatak*, he has evaluated this martyrdom of his father in the following words :

"Tegh Bahadur broke the mortal vessel of his body by striking it at the head of the Emperor of Delhi and retreated to his 'Original Abode', the God. Truly incomparable is this great deed done to assert and project three basic human rights : One, to secure for every man the liberty to worship; Two, to uphold the inviolable dignity of every man's private and personal point of contact with God and his right to observe dharma, what he conceives as basic principles of cosmic or individual existence; and thirdly to uphold every good man's imprescriptible right to pursue his own vision of happiness and self fulfillment."<sup>30</sup>

Guru Gobind Singh thereafter retired for some years to the Himalayan hills in the Hindu principality of Nahan, where he built a fortified establishment near a strategic ford of the river, Jamuna, and gave it the picturesque name of, 'The Bracelet', Paonta, for, here the river encircles the spur of the mountain like a bracelet. The Guru spent a number of years at this place in acquiring self-education and he thus completed the academic tuition his father had begun. He acquired mastery of Sanskrit language and delved deep into its literature, besides the vernacular literature and he also acquired acquaintance with the Arabic and Persian languages and their respective literatures. He did a great deal of creative literary work besides organising the religious and social activities of the Sikhs but his plans were interrupted by a sudden and concerted attack on his camp by the local levies reinforced by a contingent of the imperial troops, no doubt, under the orders of Emperor Aurangzeb who was then campaigning in Deccan. The Guru repulsed the attack by inflicting heavy losses on the enemy but he decided to transfer his seat of residence from 'The Bracelet' to the old village founded by his father, Anandpur, at the banks of the Sutlej. It was at Anandpur that Guru Gobind Singh proceeded to mature his plans for the regeneration of his people and for organising them into a power that would ensure liberty of worship and a dignified living for all peace-loving people. He organised an Academy of Letters, which employed over four dozen full-time scholars, whose job it was to translate, into the vernacular of the people, the extant books on arts and sciences. The fruits of these labours were compiled together into a sort of 'Encyclopedia of Knowledge', under the title of, 'The Book of the All-Steel', *Sarbloha-grantha*. This is the first Encyclopedia produced in the world during the modern times, in Asia or Europe, but unfortunately the manuscript which is reputed to have weighed over seventy kilograms was lost in the spated rivulet, Sirsa in 1704 when the imperial forces of Aurangzeb evicted the Guru out of the fortified town of Anandpur. It was on the Hindu New Year Day, the 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1699, that the Guru inaugurated the Order of the Khalsa in a manner, at once dramatic and mystical. Before a gathering of over a hundred thousand Sikhs from all over India, he unsheathed his sword and asked for volunteers to lay down their lives in the cause of human decency and dignity, Truth and Religion. Each volunteer, one presenting himself, was taken to an enclosure out of which the Guru emerged, each time, with his sword dripping with blood, and when five volunteers had been thus accepted the Guru presented all of them to the audience in new uniforms, and ordained them as the first *Five Knights of the Order of the Khalsa*. These five Knights were administered the Sikh baptism through a ritual which seeks symbolically to reproduce the mystery of parthenogenetic creation of the First Things, out of the Prime Water. The Guru then called upon all the able bodied major Sikhs, who by then numbered in millions throughout India, and Central Asia, to join the Order of the Khalsa and the chronicler had recorded that, within a short time, more than 80,000 men and women joined. As soon as the news of this event reached the Imperial ears of Aurangzeb down south, he felt a deep concern and issued fresh orders, obviously under the advice and spiritual guidance of the grandson of the *Mujaddid*, Khwaja Saifud-Din, reaffirming his previous prescript of November 20, 1693, in which he had directed his Military Governors in the north to the effect that,

"Gobind declares himself to be the Nanak. All Military Commanders concerned are ordered

to prevent him from assembling his followers.”<sup>31</sup>

It was in pursuance of these orders that the Military Governor of Sirhind and the Military Governor of Lahore, joined by the Hindu forces of the semi-autonomous Himalayan states, invested the fortifications of Anandpur in 1701. The Guru kept this combined Imperial military might of the whole of north-western India at bay for over three years, till, in the winter of 1704, he was prevailed upon to vacate the forts at Anandpur under a solemn promise of safe conduct which promise was treacherously broken as soon as the Guru opened the gates of the fortifications and came out with his few remaining followers. The two sons of the Guru lost their lives in fighting against this treacherous enemy, and the other two young sons, seven and five years old, were captured alive and entombed in a brick wall at Sirhind, to die the death of martyrs, on their refusal to abjure their religious faith in favour of Islam. Khwaja Mohammed Saifud-Din was at this time, back at Sirhind, available as special adviser and confidant, to its military governor, the *Beyzid Khan*, ‘Bajida’ of folk-lore. While the two infant sons of the Guru were bricked under the orders of this ‘Bajida’ as advised by Khwaja Mohd. Saifud-Din, the last words which the elder brother addressed to his younger brother are recorded as saying : “Think of our great great grandfather, Guru Hargobind, our illustrious grandfather, Guru Teg Bahadur, and our incomparable father, and the glorious religion of Guru Nanak. We must not do anything unbecoming.” But Guru Gobind Singh himself refused to fall into the hands of his Imperial enemies, and he boldly struck his way into the desert part of the eastern region of the Punjab where large number of new members of the Order of the Khalsa gathered under him with whose aid he repulsed all the subsequent attacks on him by the pursuing Imperial troops. In 1706, the Guru prepared the final collocation of the Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth* earlier prepared by the Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjun, and declared that there shall be no more human successors to the line of the Nanaks after him and that, henceforth, the Light of God shall operate on earth through the dual agency of the Corporate Body of the Order of the Khalsa and the Word of the Guru as enshrined in this finally edited, *Adi Granth*. Henceforth the title of, ‘Guru’, came to be attached to the Book and the Corporate Body, both. The first is called, The *Guru Granth* and the second, the *Guru Panth*, i.e. the Light, and the Way. The Guru then journeyed towards Deccan where he met a Hindu ascetic, mature in yogic skills and firm of mind, by the name of Madho Dass, who as soon as he met the Guru was transfixed into a trance out of which he feebly and gradually came out to make the question :

“Who art thou?

To this the Guru made the answer:

Look within thy-self and find out.”

The ascetic then slowly came out with the question.

“Art thou Guru Gobind Singh?

The Guru nodded and the ascetic prostrated himself at the Guru’s feet in submission, saying, “I am thy slave, your *bandeh*, at your bidding and command.”<sup>32</sup>

This ascetic was initiated into Sikhism and was then knighted as a member of the Order of the Khalsa, and was appointed as the Commander of the Sikhs. Soon after, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1708, the Guru, while resting in his mid-day siesta in his tent at Nanded, in South India, was treacherously stabbed by a Pathan assassin, who, on the pretence of seeking spiritual illumination had gained admittance into the tent of the Guru. This assassin had been sent, all the way, from Sirhind, by Bajida, instigated by the fanatical Khwaja Mohammed Saiful-Din, the spiritual guide of Aurangzeb and the grandson of the *Mujaddid*, who by now had returned to and settled down at Sirhind. It was the hidden hand of the Khwaja Saiful-Din that procured Imperial orders for the siege of Anandpur in 1701, its sack and destruction by treachery in 1704, and the barbarous death to which the two infant sons of the Guru were bricked alive at Sirhind. The stabbing of Guru Gobind Singh was a link in the chain. Although the Guru dispatched the assassin on the spot, as his other companion was killed by the Guru’s bodyguard, the Guru refused to allow his stomach wounds, stitched up, to heal, declaring, according to a tradition, “We have no further use of this stitched-up corporal frame.

That what was assigned to us by the God Almighty has been accomplished. The Order of the Khalsa is now already nine years old, which is the legal age of majority for warriors. We now must go back to where we came from, for, such is the Will of God.” Thereafter, as all accounts agree, the Guru had a funeral pyre of odoriferous wood made up, and after conferring his last benedictions on mankind as a whole and speaking words of comfort to his beloved Order of the Khalsa, he set this funeral pyre aflame through the all-consuming cosmic fire emitted through his nostrils,<sup>33</sup> and no relic of his body was found within the cold ashes, which were curiously probed into, against the Gurus instructions. The chronicler records that the last words which the Guru uttered while sitting in the lotus posture on the funeral pyre, were : *Wahaguruji ka Khalsa Wahaguruji ki fateh*, that is, “the Order of the Khalsa is of God, to whom the final victory for ever and for ever more.”<sup>34</sup>

A year earlier, Commander Banda Singh, on whom the title of, Bahadur, had been conferred by the Guru, had arrived in northern India where, gathered around him thousands of them, the Knights of the Order of the Khalsa, in compliance with Guru Gobind Singh’s written directives communicated through Bandeh Singh, to declare an open war against the Imperial authority of the Mughals. In the war manifesto he issued he declared, *inter alia*, that,

“The Guru has done me the honour of appointing me as his slave, a bandeh, to chastise the foreign depredators, the Turks. In fulfillment of my Mission, I propose to meet condign punishment to the criminal governor of Sirhind and to destroy his military base with the ultimate object of making the people free from the yoke of tyrants.”<sup>35</sup>

Thus the Sikh doctrines preached by Guru Nanak fully blossomed into the concept of the Order of the Khalsa which was to be a closely-knit Society of voluntary members and selected on the basis of special qualifications, disposition and character, pledged to make the Sikh Way of life prevail, with the ultimate objective of establishing a plural, free, open global society grounded in a universal culture. Arnold Toynbee, in his monumental work, *A Study of History*,<sup>36</sup> is quite right in assessing that the Order of the Khalsa is the true prototype of the All Russian Communist Party of Lenin, though he is mistaken in his judgement that the Slave-household of the Ottoman Padishah, and the Qyaslbash fraternity of the devotees of the Iranian Safawis were permeated with a similar ethos as inspires the Order of the Khalsa, or as animates the Communist Party of Russia. The Order of the Khalsa is the first human society in the world-history, organised with the deliberate object of and pledged to bring about an oecumenical human Society, grounded in a world-culture, which represents a free and organic fusion of the various strands of the spiritual heritage of Man. The members of the order of the Khalsa are pledged to work in a spirit of a self-abnegating and dedicated life<sup>37</sup> for the realisation of this objective which is grounded in spiritual values, but which is this-earthly; to be realised in the mundane life of human beings to flower eventually into a World Society and a World Culture.

The basic commandment of the The tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, to the Knights of the Order of the Khalsa is,

“Thou shalt not submit to slavery, in any form whatever.”<sup>38</sup>

Our historian, Arnold Toynbee, is quite wrong in supposing, in his, *An Historian’s Approach to Religion*, that,

“Sikhism fell from (its) religious height into a political trough, because the Sikh Gurus, Hargovind and Gobind Singh succumbed to the temptation to use force.”<sup>39</sup>

There was no succumbing here to any temptation whatever, for, the Order of the Khalsa, as conceived and founded by Guru Gobind Singh, was a logical consummation of the teachings of Guru Nanak. All higher religions are founded on the concept of what they conceive to be the *summum bonum* for man and they attempt to hold out a vision of the man who has realised this end, the Ideal Man. Guru Nanak, while describing the true nature of Reality, and the discipline through which it may be approached and contacted, has given unmistakably clear clues, couched in the *vakrokti*, the ancient “tortuous speech”, which reveals the penumbra of the Mystery, as to the nature and status of this Ideal Man, by revealing that this Ideal Man is a human being who, after he



has achieved a new integration of his personality and his ultimate harmony with the Reality, operates and functions in and through the sociopolitical context on this earth. These doctrines are laid down in the concluding four stanzas of the *Japu*, and when Guru Gobind Singh founded the Order of the Khalsa, he merely gave a concrete form to these doctrines of Guru Nanak and did not just attempt to meet any contingent situation such as, “a decision to fight the Mughal ascendancy with its own weapons”, as Arnold Toynbee concludes. If Bandeh Singh or Banda Singh Bahadur raised the standard of revolt against the Mughal ascendancy in the north west of India, it was incidental and not the ultimate aim or *raison-de’etre* of the Order of the Khalsa. The original writings of Guru Gobind Singh, such as have been salvaged out of his huge literary output, destroyed by the minions of the Mughal Emperor of India, make it clear that his view of the ultimate Reality, and the true function of religion, interpreted the concept “force” in a manner that did not admit of the unpleasant associations attached to it in the history of some other religions, the religions which bifurcate, sever and separate the life on this earth and the life hereafter. He was not a Worshipper of the Energy, a *Shakti* in the traditional Hindu sense, but he revealed a concept of God and religion in its relation to the life of man, which implicates that the use of “force” in a properly disciplined manner is not only desirable but imperative. Guru Nanak had clearly perceived, as Thrasymachus is shown to have held in the Republic of Plato, that violence may, some time, succeed on the sole ground that it is violent enough, and thus, violence may win for its practioners all the powers and glories of this world, and Guru Nanak, therefore, taught that although it was evil to practice violence for gaining power for its own sake, it was also evil to let violence prevail through passiveness of its victim, and Guru Nanak, therefore, enjoined that before violence becomes successful enough to clothe itself in trappings of morality, it should be resisted and defeated, destroyed or contained by all good men, by violence, if necessary. Sikhism attaches such high significance to the worth of the individual, that it is uncompromisingly anti-totalitarian, opposed to all universal busy bodies, whether of political Islam, welfarism or *sarvodya* of the secular Hindu by state coercion. It is from this teaching of Sikhism that the Sikh concern with politics and socio-political life arises and the commandment, “Though shalt not submit to slavery”, is also grounded in this teaching, and this teaching has far-reaching political and social implications, as it has constituted the basic impulse of the Sikh history throughout the past centuries and unless it is understood thus, any proper understanding of the original Sikh impulse and the Sikh history is necessarily mistaken.

It is a basic conception of the Sikh religion that the Ideal Man operates in and functions through the socio-political human society: It is a fundamental postulate of Sikhism that such a man is a free man. He is a free man in the sense that he has transcended the limitations of his little ego, the individual self. He has identified or he strives to identify himself with the universal Self, the God. As such, his existence is incompatible with subjugation or slavery. He, therefore, must never submit to slavery. A Sikh chronicler, Rattan Singh Bhangu, in his *Prachin Panthparkash* (early 19<sup>th</sup> century) quite rightly defines a Sikh as one “who owes allegiance to no mortal and thus is politically sovereign.”<sup>40</sup> The Order of the Khalsa is a Society of such Sikhs, who voluntarily agree to join it and are deemed fit to dedicate their lives for creating necessary conditions for the prevalence of the Sikhs, the Sikh way of life, and culminating in a plural, open and tolerant World Society and a World culture. Achieving political effectiveness at the decision-making levels, therefore, is the purpose and destiny of the Khalsa and the privileges and duties of this destiny are specifically bestowed on the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>41</sup> The special discipline of wearing uncut hairs, and certain other symbols, and the commandment to insist on enjoying the unlicensed right to wear arms freely is a part of the discipline made mandatory for the Knights of the Order of the Khalsa. A Sikh, who for some reason, which by its very nature can only be personal and expediential, does not voluntarily enlist in the Order of the Khalsa, remains a Sikh nevertheless.

It is vital to understand this, for, on account of lack of this understanding a great deal of confusion about Sikhism has arisen and many unnecessary resistances have been generated in the minds of many well-intentioned people about Sikhism as a World religion, and its future as a



spiritual oecumenical Impulse.

The Sikhs, under the command of Bandeh Singh Bahadur, occupied, Sirhind, the redoubtable Mughal military cantonment of north western India, in May, 1710, and conquered the whole of the adjoining region soon after. Formal sovereignty was assumed by the Sikhs with their capital at Mukhlispur, renamed, the Steel Fort, *Lohgarh*, in the hilly area of the present Ambala District, and the coin was struck with the following legend inscribed on it,

“The sword of the central Doctrine of Nanak destroys the evils of both the worlds, the poverty and slavery on this earth, and the sickness of the soul hereafter, and we hereby proclaim our sovereignty over both the worlds, the seen and the unseen. The final victory in our struggle has been vouchsafed by Guru Gobind Singh, the Harbinger of the good Tidings of the ever present Grace of God.”<sup>42</sup>

It was not to be supposed that this audacious proclamation and this seismic act would there and then destroy the Mughal empire in India, with its roots of almost a thousand years of Islamic power stuck in the heart of the land. But once the Sikhs had made this proclamation of their ultimate faith in victory and their immediate objective of political sovereignty, they never flinched or wavered under the cruelest persecutions that were inflicted on them for more than half a century after this. Bandeh Singh, Bahadur was captured and was literally sliced, bit by bit, to death, near the world-famous Qutb Minar of Delhi in 1716, and though slowly sizzled alive, by hot iron pincers, this mature Sikh, the conqueror of the flesh and its pains, and the Chosen of the Guru, did not twitch a muscle, and his last words, in answer to a question, as to whether, “you now realize that you were mistaken in your ways”, were, as have been recorded by an eye witness, to the following effect :

“I was privileged and I am proud that my Master, Guru Gobind Singh, chose me as His instrument to inflict punishment on the heads of those of whose inequities even the heavens were asleep.”<sup>43</sup>

Before Bandeh Singh was executed with unspeakable tortures, he was asked by the Mughal emperor, Farrukhsiyar, as to ‘how he would like to die’. The reply of Bandeh Singh was: “the same way as you wish to die”. And sure enough, Farrukhsiyar met his end, with tortures soon after, while imprisoned in the royal hell-hole prison of the Red Fort, *Tripolia*, where Bandeh Singh had been kept captive.

From 1716 till 1765, a period of half a century, a tiny band of Sikhs, organized into the Order of the Khalsa, faced persecutions, pogroms and well planned genocide campaigns, organised and executed, by the mightiest Empire of the times, the Mughal empire and the Pathan empire, and some of the greatest generals of Asia, such as Ahmed Shah Durrani, but they neither flinched nor abjured their faith, nor did they ever relent or waver in their profession and aim of freeing themselves of all political tyranny and social slavery, with the ultimate object of gaining decision-making political power to employ it as a lever for creating conditions in which a free and just society can arise and function. During this period, they were hunted like wild beasts after having been outlawed as a People, and a price was put on their heads, making them liable to be killed at sight, but the history does not record a single instance of voluntary apostasy or wavering in the face of these terrible persecutions, and the Sikh martyrs constitute some of the brightest jewels in the necklace of religious martyrdoms that graces the Neck of God, and emits effulgence of the glory of Man. In the year 1765, the Sikhs took possession of Lahore, the seat of the regional Imperial authority in the north western India and again struck the coin of their sovereignty with the same legend on it adopted earlier by Banda Singh, Bahadur, in compliance with the instructions of Guru Gobind Singh.

The consolidation of the political power of the Order of the Khalsa over the whole of north western India, including Kashmir and Little Tibet during the 18<sup>th</sup> century is a matter of recent history, but what is not generally known is that the political Islam as represented by its *ulema*, with their apotheosis in the *Mujaddid* of Sirhind, continued its efforts, relentlessly to oppose, and if possible to destroy, Sikhism. The story of the hidden hand of the *Mujaddid* behind the execution of

Guru Arjun, the incarceration and intent to kill Guru Hargobind through a full scale military operation, the persecution of Guru Har Rai, the evil plan against Guru Hari Krishan, the public decapitation of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the cruel killings of the infant sons of Guru Gobind Singh, and infliction of grievous wounds on his own body has been told, in brief, and this story now must be further told. Like the *Murtaza Khan*, the real murderer of Guru Arjun, and the Lalla Beg, who with his army made a murderous attack on Guru Hargobind, the *Sayyids of Barah*, were also fanatical followers of the *Mujaddid*. Who were these Barah Sayyids? True Sayyids are the sons of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed, and strictly speaking, they are only those descended from Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet. But there are *ulvi* Sayyids, descended through other wives of Ali. Barah Sayyids ascribe their origin to one *Sayyid* Abdul Farrah Wasti ibn Sayyid Daood who came to India in 389 AH. This Abdul Farrah had four sons who settled in *Chhat Banur* near modern Patiala, and they derive their name from the twelve villages, their chief strong-hold in the Muzzafarnagar District of the Gangetic plains. They served under Akbar with great fidelity.<sup>44</sup> These Sayyids were strong protagonists of the political power and ascendance of Islam in India, from the very beginning, and we learn from *Akhamameh* (Bevridge. III. p. 225) and from Badauni (Lowe. II. p. 237) that they served under Akbar with great distinction and their disappointment and frustration with the policy of toleration pursued by Akbar, when he became secure on his throne must have been great, for, they rallied around the *Mujaddid*, as soon as he declared himself the Regenerator of Islam in the Second millennium, and it was under the influence of the *Mujaddid* that they sided with Jahangir and fought against Prince Khusrau. In the *Toẓuk*<sup>45</sup> Jahangir showers hearty praises on the Barah Sayyids. "Some people make remark about them," he says, "and question their lineage, but their bravery is a convincing proof of their being Sayyids." Jahangir proceeds, "Mirza Aziz Koka always said, 'the Sayyids of Barah were the averters of calamity of this dominion', and such indeed is the case." During the war of succession amongst the sons of Shah Jehan, they sided with *Dara Shikoh* and thus remained suspect with Aurangzeb. The Sayyids of Barah must be fairly counted amongst the active powers of political Islam which had laid it down as a pre-condition for support to the cause of Jahangir, that Guru Arjun must be liquidated and Sikhism destroyed by the Sword of the State, in the interests of "the glory of Islam in India" — as the *Mujaddid* conceived it. It was for this reason that even before attacking the stronghold of Sirhind in 1710, Banda Singh Bahadur deemed it desirable to sack Chhat Bantir on the way, so as to chastise these Barah Sayyids. Two Sayyid brothers of Barah, one of whom, Sayyid Hassan Ali Khan, who became, Qutabal-Mulk Abdulla Khan, was made the Prime Minister of Emperor, Farrukhsiyar, and the other called Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan, grew so powerful, that it is these two brothers who put Farrukhsiyar at the throne of Delhi, and were the instigators of the genocide decree against the Sikhs. Such was their power and influence that after the death of Aurangzeb, they were known as 'kingmakers' *badishahagar*. When emperor Babadur Shah, the son and successor of Aurangzeb, died in 1712, his effeminate son, Jahangir Shah ascended the Imperial throne. It were these two Barah Sayyid brothers the *badishahgar*, who deposed Jahandar Shah to make Farruksiyar, the Emperor of Delhi. These 'King Makers' were, like their ancestors, ardent followers of the doctrines of the *Mujaddid* and it was under inspiration from the current successor of the *Mujaddid* who had, by now, fled to Delhi after the sack of Sirhind by the Sikhs, that all the resources of the 'Empire were drawn upon to make an all-out assault at the mud fortification of Banda Singh Bahadur at Gurdasnangal near the Kashmir border, as a result of which Banda Singh was captured and hacked to death at Delhi in 1716.

These *Barah Sayyids* were in the forties of the 18<sup>th</sup> century rendered impotent and relegated to obscurity by the Sikhs, through subjugation and destruction of their estates and headquarters in the trans-Jamuna tract, particularly the region of Muzzafarnagar. But the flames of political Islam which the *Mujaddid* had lit and directed against Sikhism, were by no means extinguished.

By AD. 1760, the greatest Hindu Power of the day, the Marathas, had spread their influence up to Indus, and the Marathas, therefore, had become as odious to the political Islam in India, as

expounded by the *Mujaddid*, as the Sikhs and Sikhism. It was Shah Wali-Ullah Dehlvi, an *ulema*, and a staunch follower and successor of the *Mujaddid*, with his seat at Delhi, to which place the *Mujaddid* headquarters had been moved ever since 1710, who worked tirelessly for instigating Najibul-Dawla, the Rohilla Chief, and Ahmed Shah, *Durrani*, the King of Kabul, to join hands to extirpate the “evil of the unbelievers”, from the country of India, as a result of which the fifth invasion of the *Durrani* took place, culminating in the historic battle of Panipat fought on January 14, 1761 which sealed the fates of the expanding Maratha power in India. But the Sikhs still remained alive and kicking, and Shah Wali Ullah, therefore, sponsored the sixth invasion of the *Durrani* as a result of which over thirty thousands Sikhs, men, women and children were suddenly pounced upon and massacred by the Mughal invaders, near Ludhiana in the Indian Punjab on February 5, 1762. Believing that thereby he had completely broken the back of the Sikh people, for ever, as he had done that of the Marathas, Ahmed Shah *Durrani*, guided by the advice of the successor of the *Mujaddid*, Wali-Ullah, proceeded to blow up and level down the Central Temple of Sikhism at Amritsar, which, however, the Sikhs rebuilt the next year.

Even when by the first quarter of the 19th century, the Sikh political power was securely and firmly established in the Punjab, Afghan Frontier province, Kashmir and Little Tibet, the followers of the *Mujaddid* were still active against the Sikhs. One Ahmed Shah, Brelvi, a successor of the *Mujaddid*, with his headquarters further removed to Bareilly, a town in the Gangetic plain under the wings of the British and secure from the reach of the Sikhs as Delhi was no longer so, undertook an extensive tour of Arabia and other neighbouring Islamic countries in the twenties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a view to canvassing support for organising a holy Muslim war, *jihad*, against the Sikhs, and with the tacit sympathy of the British rulers of India he was enabled to organise and collect, in 1831, a formidable and well equipped force of more than two hundred thousand fighting men near Nowshera on the Afghan Frontier, then a Sikh frontier town, to destroy the Sikh political power. In the resultant contest, however, it was the reverend Ahmad Shah, who perished, and the task of finishing the Sikh political power fell to the lot of another People who had little sympathy whatever with the ideas and ideals of the *Mujaddid* of Sirhind.

For want of proper ideological awareness and comprehension, the Khalsa Commonwealth by now had degenerated, in fact, into a Monarchical system of government, with the result that they fell a prey, though by no means an easy one, to the predatory onslaughts of the Western adventurers, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and their homeland and their dominions became a part of the British Indian Empire in the year 1849. But, as an enemy writer and an eye-witness, Joseph Davey Cunningham generously records in his, *A History of the Sikhs*, at the battle field, while abandoned by their Hindu controlled Civil Government, and treacherously abandoned by their pseudo-Sikh military Generals; and

“although assailed on either side, by squadrons of horse and battalions of foot, no Sikh offered to submit and no disciple of Guru Gobind Singh asked for quarter. They everywhere showed front to the victor and stalked slowly and sullenly while many rushed singly forth to meet assured death by contending with a multitude. The victors looked with stolid amazement upon the indomitable courage of the vanquished.”

And followed a hundred years of British subjugation for the Order of the Khalsa, during which century its Knights neither forgot the use of arms, which the Guru had commanded them never to neglect, nor their resolve to be sovereign, although the art and the aim could not be coordinated in view of the circumstances in which they were placed. This too was the Will of the Timeless Person, the GuruAkalpurkh, subserving Divine Design!

The exit of the British from India in 1947, once again saw the Sikhs engulfed in the resultant fury, which was a hangover from the centuries-old struggle between Sikhism, in its determination to survive, and the political Islam, of which the Regenerator for the Second Millennium was a symbol, in its aim of destruction of “the evil of the unbelievers”, and as a result; two hundred thousands Sikhs perished in the communal fury of the Partition of the country in which they struck as many

blows as they received.

It may now almost be said that Sikhism has successfully withstood the fury and onslaughts of the political Islam in India, and with the spiritual Islam, it never had any fundamental serious quarrel, and this has made possible an understanding and mutual accommodation, genuine and sincere, between Sikhism and Islam such as was the original aim and wish of the Founders of Sikhism.

From its traditional role of the Protector of the Hindus and its historical role of a defender of the basic values of life, Sikhism has now been placed in the position of a nominally subordinate partnership, but in practice, complete subjection, with a politically resurgent Hinduism, which finds it difficult to tolerate any non-conformity, or to accept and concede the right of others to exist in their own right and to forgive those whom it has already and grievously wronged. As Sikhism is an afflation of man's culture, its flower and entelechy, and thus, there is no question of a genuine quarrel between Hinduism and Sikhism. But the reality of the neo-socio-political Hinduism as it has manifested in recent years, in its attitudes towards Sikhism, lends some colour to the genuine fears of some keen observers that in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Sikhism, faces a real crisis, a possible consequences of which might be its diffusion in spirit and physical dispersion abroad, obliging it to seek refuge, for its sheer survival, in some political arrangements that promise a haven of safety. But it is also likely that as time passes, a saner, a less parochial strain in the Hindu mind, might assert itself such as does not deem crafty subtlety as wisdom, cruelty as firmness, narrow self-interest as statesmanship, and legalism and causticity as the true essence of Hinduism, and which no longer regards intentions unrelated to moral responsibility, as legitimate dynamism of mature human conduct.

However, Sikhism, as a World religion, and as spiritual impulse will have failed to establish its claim as such unless it can successfully meet the challenge that is implicit in their present situation and predicament as successfully as it did in the past in its encounter with the formidable political Islam.

That this situation is not an easy one, particularly in view of the notions that political Hinduism now entertains about its abiding and inalienable prerogative always to remain at the top. The Sikhs have a faith of playing a positive role in the future as destined by the unseen, concealed world, still hidden beneath the surface but indicated and revealed by Guru Gobind Singh as the Will of God <sup>46</sup>, of the Sikh People a derivative not from the calm regular course of things, but sanctioned and conceded on all sides, irrespective of what hopes and fears about the future of the Sikhs and Sikhism one may choose to have.

1. *Se akhian beann jinahi disandro mapri.*
2. *nam rahio sadhu rahio, rahio gur, gobind, kahu nanak is jagat main kini japio gurmant.*
3. *nam tull kichhu avar na hoe.*
4. *nanak namu chadhadi kala.*
5. *guru binu ghor andhar* — Sikh scripture.
6. *jot soi jugat sai sahi kaya pher pallatiya* — Sikh scripture.
7. Heschel, Abraham, J., *The Prophets*, N.Y. 1963, p. 364.
8. *pavai ta so janu dehi jis nau hori kil karhi vecaria.*
9. *es nao horu thao nahin sabdi lagi svaria.*
10. *satguru bahjon hor kacei hai bani.*
11. *kahinde kacce sundi kacce kaccin akh vakhani.*
12. *chit jini ka hir laia maia bolain pae ravani.*
13. *anand anand sabh ka kahai, anand guru te jania.*  
*anand bhaia meri mae satguru main paia.* — Sikh Scripture.
14. *dvi vinsat dilli umraev, iti sikh manjis bithain* — *Gurpratap Suryodey Granth.*
15. *satian ehu na akhierh jo jali aggi marran.*

16. *hor manamukhi daj ji rakhi vikhalahi so kad bankaru kacen pa.*
17. “*pap di janj lai kabulon dhaiyo jori mange dan ve, Lalo, kadian, bahmanan ki gall thakki akad padhe saiton ve Lalo.* — Sikh Scripture
18. *Maktubaat*. Lucknow, 1919.
19. Du Jarric, Father Pierre, *Akbar and the Jesuits*, (trans. H. Payne) 1st. edition, London, 1926.
20. *bun hukam hoa meharvan da, pai koi na kisai rinjan do, sab sukhali, Vulbian hoa hamlemi raj jio* – Sikh Scripture.
21. “*Mussalman momdil hovai,  
antar ki mal dil te dhovai,  
dunia rang na avai nede,  
jio kusam patu ghio pak hara.*”
22. *Maktubat* I. 47.
23. *Maktubat* I. 193.
24. *Ibid.* x. 54, 80, 163, 165, 193.
25. *Muktubat* I. 81.
26. Sheikh Badrud-Din Sirhindi, *tr.* Khwaja Ahmed Hussain, Mansur Steam Press, Lahore, 1908.
27. Mohammad Hasham Kishmi Burhanpuri, *Zubdehtul-Muqamat* (M.S. 1827, Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna).
28. *Rauzatul Qayyumiyyah* is, in original; an Arabic work by Khwaja Kamaluddin Mohammed Ehsan, who was a descendent of the Regenerator.
29. Manuci Niccolao, *Storia do Mogor* (1653-1708). trans. William Irwin. 4. Volume London. 1907-1908. p. IV. 308.
30. *tilak janju rakha prabha taka, kino bado kalu main saka,  
dharam betu saka jini kia, sis dia par sirr na dia  
sadhan betu iti jini kari, sis dia par si na ucarii.*
31. *Akhbarati-Darbari-Mu‘alla*. Royal Asiatic Society, London. Vol. I. 1677-1695. Entry, dated, November 20, 1693.
32. Ganda Singh, *Life of Banda Singh Bahadur*. Amritsar, 1935. p. 15.
33. “*tab samadh satguru lagai, yogagni turan upjai  
Gurpratap suryodey* III. (ii). 24. 18.
34. *Waheguraji ki fateh kahi ant ki bar* — Gurpratap-suryodey.
35. “*turkan ke nij levan bair pathio guru ne mujhka kar bandeh,  
main kar khuar, Bajide ko mar, Sirhindujad, karehon suchbanda.* — Gyani Gyan Singh, *Panthprakash*, (kavita). 1896-1900. Vol. III published, Amritsar, 1924.
36. *Abridgment*. VoIs. VII-X. Oxford, 1957, pp. 187-188.
37. *Khalsa so jis apna tanman dhan guru nu saunpia.*  
-Rahitnameh Bhai Caupa Singh
38. *raj karhain ikke lar mar hain.* — *Pracin Panth Prakash*
39. *Gifford Lectures* (1952-1953). Oxford, 1959, p. 110.
40. *kis hun ki ih kan na rakhat, shabinabah khud hi ko bhakhat.*
41. *tab singhan ko bakhs kar bahu sukh dikh lai,  
phir sabh prithvi ke upare hakam thairai,  
tin jagat sambhal kari anand racai,  
tab bhaio jagat sabh khalsa manamukh bharmai.*  
-Var, Bhai Gurdas II.
42. *Sikkeeh zad bar har du-alam, teghi-nanak vahibast, fatth shabinshaban, fadli saccasahib ast.* — Gobind Singh
43. Kamvar Khan, *Tazkirat-Chughtaiya*. Ms. 1723. f. 180. Also, Mirza Mohammed Harisi, *Ibratnameh*. Ms. f. 62.
44. *Akbarnameh*, Bevaridge, III. 225, 224, Badauni, Lowe. II. 237.

45. II. p. 269.

46. *agiya bhai Akal ki tabhi chalaio panth.....*  
*raj karega Khalsa aki rahai no koi.*

## CHAPTER III

### THE HEART OF SIKHISM

Religion deals essentially with three subjects, the nature of Reality, the nature of Man, of its relation to this Reality and, lastly, with the way to reach this Reality. The first two subjects belong to Philosophy proper and it is the third subject which brings the other two into the domain of religion. As long as religion merely defines the nature of Reality and seeks to lay down the true values of human activity, it is no more than Philosophy and Ethics, but when it seeks and promises to help human soul to take these truths to heart and to put them into action with the object of resolving the problem of suffering and alienation which is inherent in the innermost core of man, his self-consciousness, then it becomes religion proper. Man can, possibly, keep his mind away from the intellectual problems of the mystery of universe, the nature of his own self and that of the world around him and the nature of the relationship that binds both, but he cannot help yearning and suffering. As Pascal has said, "Man is the only wretched creature that there is" and a religion which did not whole-heartedly tackle this problem would ring hollow. In this sense, Buddhism was eminently right when it declared that, the basic human problem, demanding resolution is "*sab dukha*" i.e. all individuated existence entails suffering which means that suffering inheres in the very nature of the human psyche.

Sikhism is essentially a Religion of the Way, i.e. something that must be lived and experienced rather than something that must be intellectually grasped and declared. True, there can be practice without the dogma. Sikhism, therefore, has its doctrines, its dogmatic stand, its view of Reality, its view of the nature of man, and their inner relationship, but it lays primary stress on the practice, the discipline, "the way which leads to "the cessation of suffering", as Gautam, the Buddha formulated it.

A careful reading and understanding of the Sikh scripture reveals that the religion of Sikhism has three postulates implicit in its teachings, One, that there is no essential duality between the spirit and the matter.<sup>1</sup> Two, that man alone has the capacity to enter into conscious participation in the process of the Evolution, with further implication that the process of Evolution, as understood by the modern man, has come to a dead-end and it, therefore, must be rescued by the conscious effort of man who alone is capable now of furthering this process.<sup>2</sup> Three, that then man has reached the highest goal of Evolution, namely, the vision of God, he must not be absorbed back into God but must remain earth conscious so as to transform this mundane world into a higher and spiritual plane of existence.<sup>3</sup>

The first of these propositions is a postulate of Philosophy. The view taken by Sikhism on this point is that 'the spirit' and 'the matter' are not antagonistic to or dis severed from each other, the one subtle, the other gross, but they are simply and just dissimilated, and that the core of the human nature which is self-conscious, and the physical nature which is not conscious and is utterly inert, are accountable ultimately in nature of 'the subtle.' The mathematico-physical aspect of Nature, to a mode of consciousness which is pin-pointed and individuated, appears to be poles apart from itself. Indeed, consciousness as 'subject' is wholly dependent for its very existence upon the object as its polarity. A true comprehension, however, which results from proper religious discipline and culture of sublimating and integrating the human faculties, removes this basic duality between the mind and the matter. "When I saw truly, I knew that all was primeval. Nanak, the subtle and the gross are, in fact, identical."<sup>4</sup> This assertion is repeated in the Sikh scripture again and again in exegesis of the basic formula of Sikh dogmatism, given as the opening line of the Sikh scripture, in which it is declared that, "the Primary is true, the pre-Temporal is true, the Phenomena is true, and the yet-to-be-Evolved is, likewise, true."<sup>5</sup> This view of Reality which Sikhism postulates, has far-reaching implications, both in respect of the traditional Hindu philosophy, and the problem of the

true conduct for man. Firstly, it, in essence, repudiates the basic concept of Hindu thought embodied in the doctrine of Maya which is stated as the illusory Power which createth illusion and ignorance. True, the subtle Hindu mind characterises it as, *anarvacni* 'unsayable, whether *is* or *is not*,' "real yet not real," but it definitely is a veiling obscuring Power of nature, and an agent of error and illusion, accountable for the manifestation of all phenomena. In Sikhism, the term, Maya, is retained but it is interpreted otherwise so as to make it not a category of existence, but a mere stage and plane in the involution of the spirit. The result of this re-interpretation is replete with tremendous consequences for the practical outlook of man. The world of phenomena is no longer a dream and a phantasmagoria in the minds of the gods, to be by-passed and shunned by serious minded persons. It is as real, in fact as the Ultimate Reality, but the perceiving human mind is beset with limitations that must be transcended and cut as under. It is this that has made it possible for Sikhism to lay down that the highest religious discipline must be practiced while remaining active in the socio-political context, and not by giving up and renouncing the worldly life. It is this which has given the Sikh mind a sense of urgency, and imparted to it a genuine strain of extroversion which the Western mind has achieved only adopting basically different postulates, such as that, this one life on earth is the only life a soul may look forward to till eternity, and that, the essence of the real is its characteristic, of being the object of sensory-motor perception. It is the peculiar virtue of Sikhism that while it retains the primacy of the spirit over the matter, it prevents human life from degenerating into the purely secular and expedient modes of activity. It is a further virtue of this postulate of Sikh religion that it lends the necessary sense of urgency to the mind of man and imparts to it an extrovert outlook, in so far as it is desirable to retain them for human welfare, material prosperity and spiritual advancement on this earth.

The second postulate inherent in the teachings of Sikhism is, that the blind urge of Evolution, the thrust of the Life Force, after reaching the point of creating the self-conscious man, has come to a dead end and by itself is incapable of making any further real progress, unless the self-consciousness, in which is grounded the will of man, now takes a consciously guided and directed part in this evolutionary process: "Hail, the Guru for, he teaches the ascent of man over himself." <sup>7</sup> This line of thought, in various forms, runs throughout the voluminous Sikh scripture, and it is legitimate to say that the concept of the "Superman", which agitated the mind of Nietzsche during the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, and from whom the modern Indian thinker, Aurovindo Ghose, has taken his cue, is first of all adumbrated in the Sikh scripture and that, the conscious effort man alone is now, at this stage, capable of furthering the process of Evolution that has gone so far to make and shape the phenomenal world, is now a familiar concept to thinking modern minds.

But by far the most startling insight of Sikhism is that the true end of the man is not such a Vision of God that ends in re-absorption of the individual into the Absolute Reality, but the emergence of a race of God-conscious men, who remain earth-aware and thus operate in the mundane world of the phenomena, with the object of transforming and spiritualising it into a higher and ampler plane of existence. "The God-conscious man is animated with an intense desire to do good in this world." <sup>8</sup> By and large the aim of the highest religious discipline has been taken and accepted as the attainment of abiding and self-sufficient identity with, or propinquity to God. It was not thus thought in terms of utilising the God-consciousness for transforming and spiritualising the life on earth, and transformation of humanity. It is this stance of Sikhism which is the true prototype of the sophisticated philosophy of the modern Hindu sage Aurovindo Ghose, though there might be no direct indebtedness to the Sikh thought. Those however, who know how basic and revolutionary trends of human thought of this kind are capable of influencing men and minds, far separated by distance and time, without contact or causal connection from its original appearance, may perceive no difficulty in seeing the nexus between the two. In this connection it is interesting to recall that not long ago, when Ramakrishna the *Paramhansa*, the modern Hindu theophant, was at his most critical stage of blocked theophanic development, it was a Sikh ascetic, Udasi Totapuri, who imparted to the *Paramhansa* the Sikh esoteric mantram efficacious for



removing impediments on the spiritual path, and that is why the most illustrious chela of the *Paramhansa*, Swami Vivekanand, so often uttered and introduced into his writings and speeches the Sikh mystic formula, *Vaheguru*, so as to sustain his flow of inspiration.

What is the discipline, and the practice which Sikhism recommends as necessary and efficacious for attaining this God-consciousness, and for yoking it to the evolutionary transformation of life and humanity on this earth, and on the plane of mundane existence? It is the Doctrine and Practice of the Name. "In the Age through which humanity is passing now no other practice but that of the Name is efficacious. Therefore; practice the Discipline of Name" <sup>9</sup> This is the message repeated again and again in the Sikh scripture. <sup>10</sup> "O, my mind, there is no help but in the Name; other ways and practices are full of pitfalls."

Now, which is this 'Discipline of the Name' which Sikhism teaches, as the essence of religion for mankind in the present Age?

In the history of great religions, five paths have been recognized as efficacious for leading to liberation, i.e., for achievement of the *summum bonum* of religion: 1. disinterested action, known as the *Karmayoga* in Hindu religious thought; 2. devotion known as *bhakti*; 3. gnosis, *the jnan*; 4. the ritual known, as *yajñ*; and 5. asceticism, maceration of *tapas*. This fifth and the last path to liberation is a typical Indian contribution to the history of religious practices. All the other four have been accepted, in some form or other with varying degrees of stress on one or the other as valid paths to liberation. In the Sikh scripture, the first three are variously mentioned and summed under "the Discipline of Name". No logically systematic account of the theory or practice of 'The Name' is given in 'the Sikh scripture, but throughout its voluminous pages, it stresses, again and again, with a wealth of metaphor and imagery, illustrative material and exposition, that the , discipline of the Name is the only suitable and efficacious practice for leading to the Vision of God for final fulfillment of man, for cancelling his basic alienation and for achieving the unitive experience of the Numenon. It is further sententiously declared that, "Sikhism is the religion of the Name." <sup>11</sup>

In their Congregational Prayer, for the last three centuries, the Sikhs, morning and evening, conclude their collective supplication to God by saying, "May the Religion of the Name, preached by Nanak, increase and prevail in the world, ever and for ever more". <sup>12</sup> The discipline of *bhakti*, the discipline of *karma*, and the dis-interested works, are also mentioned, commended and praised but throughout it is tacitly assumed that it is a part and parcel of the basic Discipline, "the Practice of the Name" <sup>13</sup> The vision of God is, not easier to have by any other endeavour than that of the Name and man engages in this effort only by good fortune, for all the Various disciplines and practices pale into insignificance before the Practice of Name". <sup>14</sup> It is asserted that, *gyan*, the Gnosis, the cancellation of the dispersal of mind; *dhyan*, and all-comprehending intuition, *tatva-buddhi*, is a fruit of the Practice of the Name <sup>15</sup> and that devotion, *bhakti* is a corollary of the discipline of Name. It is again said that "disinterested action, in the sense of high altruism or genuine *karmayoga* is a natural propensity of the man in whom the discipline of the Name is ripened." <sup>16</sup> "The Mastery of mind, the acme of Purity, and all-encompassing Consciousness, are results of the programmed remembrance of God, the Name" <sup>17</sup>

It is clear, therefore, that Sikhism teaches a religious discipline which is in essence a practice which includes the technique of *bhakti*, the supreme training of the emotions in the service of one supreme End, and a socio-politically active life, motivated not by the little ego of the individual but by an individual self which is yoked to the universal Self.

The technique of yoga has aroused a great deal of interest in the West during the recent years, but mostly as a technique for achieving mental rest and physical health, though this is not the true purpose of the science of Yoga. The concept of *yoga*, though not the term, is as old as the Rigveda itself. That the Vedic material is complex is recognised in the *Nirukta*; the science of analysis of the Veda, itself which takes account of several methods of its exegesis. In recent times, particularly by Western scholars of Archeology, it has been suggested that Vedic material is primarily historical events, transmuted into myth. It is also said that it consists of poetic exordia to the Brahmanic ritual.

There is a theory, recently revived by Sri Aurovindo Ghose that the Veda is a vast piece of symbolism representing the passions of the soul and its striving for highest spiritual realms, a concept which he himself has adopted as the proto-type of his great poem, the *Savitri*. Bergaigne suggested the theory that all mythological portrayals in the Veda are variants of the sacred fire and the sacrificial liquor, the *soma*.<sup>18</sup> Whatever may be said about this as a general theory of interpretation of the Vedas, it has the merit of suggesting a method which appears to be plausible, for, obscure Vedic texts assume some kind of coherence in general if in them we seek an attempt at portraying correspondence between the world of men, the performers of the *yajna*, and the immaterial, ethereal World of the gods, in short; the microcosm and the macrocosm. The primary function of the *rishis*, the revealers and preservers of the Veda, was to ensure the ordered functioning of the mundane world, and of the religious ritual, by reproducing the succession of cosmic events, in their ritual and in the imagery which that ritual embodies, and this is the true meaning that the Vedic ritual signifies. The term *ṛta*, the basic concept of Vedic imagery, is a designation of the cosmic order which sustains the human order, the social ethics and the social coherence. Terms such as, *dharmman*, *kratu*, have a two-fold significance according to whether they refer to men or the gods, to the plane of the *adhyatmam* or the *adhidavaitam*, as the Upanisads put it. Thus understood the Veda portrays the cosmic magical synthesis, symbolically expressed. The cosmic order is conceived as a vast *yajna*, the prototype of the *yajna* which the man must perform so as to ensure the integration of the two. Thus, Vedism is already a form of collective, communist yoga, a process of yoking together, of fashioning a recurrent linkage, in which the gods and men both play their parts as witnesses and participants. It is this strain of thought which accounts for the yearning of the Indian mind constantly seeking hidden correspondences between things which belong to entirely different conceptual systems. The science and the technique of Yoga, as it has been developed in India since thousands of years; is thus as old as the Hindu thought itself. The term, comes from the Sanskrit root, *yuj* which means “to yoke, or join together”. As the specific science of psychological discipline it is designated to signify the union of the individual self with the universal Self, the vision of God or absorption into God. As an art, the technique of Yoga has been used since the beginning of Hindu historical time, as the archaeological discoveries recently made in Mohenjodaro, where a big water reservoir surrounded by unventilated cubicles, designed to ensure deoxygenation calculated to alter body chemistry facilitative of introversion, has been unearthed, lends support to the speculation that, already in the millennia before the dawn of the Christian era, the art and practice of yoga was well developed and established. Its techniques and teachings have been accumulated through a continuous stream of adepts who have handed them down from generation to generation. Patanjali a Hindu savant of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., is the author of the text, *Yogasutra*, which is now the most ancient text on the science of Yoga, though its opening *sutra* says, “Now a revised text of yoga, which makes it clear that this text is by no means the first of its kind. The philosophical basis of this system of yoga, as expounded by Patanjali is the *Samkhya*, which teaches that the world order is risen and is an expansion of the highest category of Intelligence, the *Mahat*, that there is no part without an assignable function, a value, a purpose, that there is always an exact selection of means for the production of definite ends, that there is never a random aggregation of events, that there is order, regulation and system. It postulates two ultimate realities, the Spirit and the Matter, the *Purusa* and the *Prakriti*, to account for all experience, as logical principles out of which all things evolve. The fundamental tenet of the *Samkhya* is that creation is impossible, for something cannot come out of nothing, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, and that the real movement therefore only consists of modification. This is the central doctrine of the *Samkhya*, and it is called, *satyavada* and its whole system evolves from this as its logical ground. The *Samkhya* devises this process of cosmic modification into twenty-five categories of Mind and Matter and shows how the whole Phenomena has evolved out of these two sources in accordance with these categories. The philosophy of orthodox Yoga postulates that what is true of this macrocosm is also true of the human microcosm and that, as the individual soul has involuted, through a set process, out of the

universal Spirit, it can, by the reverse process, evolve into the universal Spirit. The yoga assumes that the individual soul is the part and parcel of the universal Substance, but so involved in the matter of Time and Space as to have lost all recognition of its true nature. The yoga sets forth a know-how and a technique to bring the individual back to his own and original position, to absolve him from the clutches of Matter and to return him to the essence from which he came, and thus to abstract him from every aspect of Time and Space.

In the Sikh scripture the final goal referred to in this philosophic thesis, is indicated by imagery: “a return to the original home”, by the human soul.<sup>19</sup>

Since Sikhism abolishes adamant duality of mind and matter, it by implication, refuses to base the philosophy of its discipline of the Name, on the categories of the *Samkhyā*. The Sikh doctrine of the Name does not assume the cosmological theory as set forth in the *Samkhyā* system but it does assert that the basic sickness of the human soul arises out of its individuation, its fissiparous involution away from the universal Spirit, and that its cure and restoration of health lies in a process of disciplined progress towards its primal source, which is God.<sup>20</sup> For this it recommends a psychological technique, the basic ingredient of which is the repetition of the ‘Name of God’, accompanied by a constant and unceasing effort to empty the individual mind of all its content, conscious as well as sub-conscious.<sup>21</sup> Since Sikhism recommends that religion must be lived and practised in the socio-political context, the Sikh practice of the yoga of the Name may be pursued, and even must be pursued throughout, while engaged in earning honest livelihood. The complicated technique of classical yoga as laid down in the text of Patanjli and the philosophical concepts by which it is validated, they both go together, and the earning of a livelihood and the practice of the classical yoga cannot go together. In Sikhism this predicament has been removed by laying down a technique which is at once practicable and efficacious. This practice of the Name is mechanical to start with, but has its adjuncts, without which it cannot succeed and fructify. The first adjunct is strictly ethical life. The Sikh scripture constantly stresses that unless a man leads an unstained ethical life he cannot come nigh unto God, although Sikhism does not confuse or equate the ethical commandment and value with the religious experience as such. A Sikh, engaged in the discipline of Name, himself must lead a life of the highest ethical purity, in word, thought and deed, and every faltering from this high norm of rectitude constitutes a stumbling block in the progress of his ultimate realisation of God. The ‘ethical life’ of the *Namgyoga*, takes over, modifies and encapsulates the inescapable preliminary of the classical yoga, that is its ‘five restraints’, *pañcayama*. These five ‘restraints’ are (1) *ahimsa* do not kill, (2) *satya*, do not lie, (3) *asteya*, do not steal, (4) <sup>22</sup> *brahmacharya*, sexual abstinence, (5) *aparigraha*, do not be greedy and grasping. These ‘restraints’ are aimed at purifying the individual, superior to the ordinary human being and they are not claimed as generative of any ‘yogic experience’, change of consciousness, but this purity is essential for further spiritual progress of the practitioner. The modified Sikh directive-capsule, so to speak, separates such elements in these ‘restraints’ of classical yoga, as are incapable or difficult of, coordination with a house-holder’s life and his full participation in socio-political activity, necessary imperatives of the Sikh way of life. For instance the ‘restraint’ of *brahmacharya* abstinence from sex-involvement, is dropped and in its place a monogamous, spiritually oriented married life, free from deviation and promiscuity is held out as the true ‘restraint’.<sup>23</sup> The encapsulated ethical conduct, *yama*, of the Sikh way of life is laid down in the Sikh scripture, in part, as follows :

Let ‘truth’ be the strict norm of all you think and do, so that your pain and anxiety may go and all felicity come to you.

Always cognise the near-presence of God through the Practice of the Name.

Avoid hurt or injury to any sentient being so that peace may come to your mind.

Be humble by helping and serving those afflicted with misery and want so as to achieve God consciousness.

Nanak testifies that verily, God is the exalter of the fallen and the lowly.<sup>24</sup>

The Sikh is then bidden to rely upon prayer and the company of holy men to support and

sustain him in his life of ethical rectitude. As he progresses in the path of spiritual development, he must deem it as his duty to persuade and help others to tread the same path; through socio-political activity which must be progressively purified of all taints of selfishness. This is the doctrine of, *seva*, of Sikhism, without which, Sikhism declares, the practice of Name does not fructify.<sup>25</sup>

It is further laid down in the Sikh scripture that the discipline of Name must be constantly vitalised by *bhakti*, devotion to God. "Increase your devotion to God in an ever ascending measure so that your mind may be purified".<sup>26</sup> The word *bhakti* has the literal meaning of, "well-joined". The word *bhakti* occurs in the *Svetasvatara*, the ancient Hindu text, which Otto Schraeder in his, *Der Hinduismus* calls, "the gateway to Hinduism", although the earlier, Panini, in his Grammar also appears to refer to it.<sup>27</sup> (IV. iii. 95-98). It was the *bhakti* principle which brought about the transition from the neuter, to the personal principle in Hindu religious speculation. Since *bhakti* is, "joining with" or "participation" in God, it presupposes an object distinct and discrete, dissimilar and distant from the subject. A purely monistic environment, such as the Sikh doctrine, is not a very fertile ground for *bhakti*. *Bhakti*, therefore, has always been better adapted to a *Vaisnavite* background wherein a personal God is assumed as taking human and subhuman forms in the phenomenal world. The orthodox Hindu theory of *bhakti* is that a god without attribute is inaccessible and that, there must be an intercessor. Since Hinduism has no founder or prophet God-incarnate, the 'Word made flesh', as the Christians say, this intermediary must be one of these human or sub-human forms of Vishnu, which he has assumed in various Time-cycles of the Creation. This is the basic doctrine of Hindu *bhakti*, though gradually has acquired many shades of secondary meanings. Since Sikhism does not countenance, *avtarvad*, the doctrine of incarnation of gods or God, it uses the term, *bhakti*, in its pristine sense of canalizing and sublimating the entire emotional energy of the individual to sustain the continuous yearning for a vision of God.<sup>28</sup> This form of *bhakti*, the Sikh scripture declares, is a necessary adjunct of the discipline of Name.<sup>29</sup>

The last adjunct of the discipline of Name, the Sikh scripture says, is the intuitive understanding of the philosophical truths which underlie the world of phenomena. This is the True knowledge, the Gnosis, and the Sikh scripture commends that a Sikh must always strive by study, by discussion, by meditation and by every mental effort, to acquire, an intellectual and intuitive understanding of the philosophic truths.<sup>30</sup>

This, in short outline, is the Discipline of the Name which Sikhism teaches as the path to the realisation of God, and, broadly speaking, it consists of the three well known paths to liberation recognised in the world-religions, namely, 'the path of unselfish action,' 'the path of devotion', and 'the path of knowledge', all subsumed under and practised as adjuncts to the grand Discipline of the technology of the *Namayoga*. The modern Hindu thinker, Aurovindo Ghose, in his own way, has tried to expound an almost identical technology under the title of, "Integral Yoga", though it is definitely something less but expressed in a more sophisticated and pedantic language.

It is, therefore, this Discipline of the Name through which Sikhism seeks not only to ensure the continuous renewal, but a firm conservancy of the fundamental traditions of the great religions of mankind; and, in addition, it thereby seeks to make available to man, new dimensions of consciousness for the purpose of a higher integration of human personality; such as would transform man and his destiny on this earth.

Out of the five paths to liberation, followed by mankind the two, namely, 'the ritual' and 'the maceration', have not been recommended and approved of by Sikhism for obvious reasons. The 'ritual' is basically repetition, aiming at renewal but discouraging and blocking development and growth, change and advancement. Mechanical rituals, where interiorisation is lacking and where mental correspondences are absent or atrophied tend to make zombies of us all.<sup>31</sup> The ritual, in its original essence, is magic and its nature and function is different from that of true religion as conceived by Sikhism. Magic seeks to control powers of nature directly through the force of spells and enchantments, techniques and know-hows, while religion recognises existence of spiritual beings external to man and the world and employs persuasive methods of sacrifice and prayer to procure

their aid. Magic is coercive and dictatorial in approach while the other is persuasive. Magic depends upon the way in which certain things are said and done for a particular purpose by those who possess the necessary skills and the power to put the supernatural force into effect, while religion is personal and supplicatory. It is for this reason that the path of the ritual and the *yajna* has been discountenanced in Sikhism. Asceticism and maceration have been likewise disowned as the desirable and direct paths to liberation<sup>32</sup>, for, these practices necessarily implicate withdrawal from socio-political activity, and Sikhism rejects such a withdrawal in view of its basic doctrines which envisage an ultimate transformation of man and his destiny on this mundane earth as the true goal and fruit of religion.

The Order of the Khalsa, which the Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh founded, must be viewed in the context of these doctrines of Sikhism as intended to be a Body of men who not only practise the essential spiritual Discipline of Sikhism, and live the life of a true Sikh, but who are also pledged to ensure, by every legitimate means, in which means is included the control of political power, the coming into existence, the prevalence and the preservation of a World Society, vitalised continuously by the afflation of the truths of religion, open, tolerant and catholic sustaining a creative World culture consistent with the spiritual dignity and the spiritual goal of man.

An outline of such a World Society is indicated in the Sikh scripture thus :

“Henceforth, such is the will of God :

No man shall coerce another;

no man shall exploit another.

Every one, each individual, has the inalienable birth-right to seek and pursue happiness and self-fulfillment.

Love and persuasion is the only Law of social coherence.”<sup>33</sup>

1. “*sargun ap nirgun bhi obi*” -(*Sukhamani. V.*)
2. “*kai janam pankhi sarap hoio, kai janam haivar brikh Joio, mil Jagdis Milan ki baria,*” (*Gauri V.*)
3. *oe purakhprani dhannajan hai upadas karhi paropkaria -Var. Gauri IV.*  
*Brahmagyani paropkar omaha. — Sukhmani. V.*
4. “*Jau bujhia tau sab kichhu mul, Nanak, so sukhm soi asthul.*” — *ibid.*
5. “*adi sac, jugadi sac, hai bhi sac, Nanak hosi bhi sac.*”
6. “*kal karanta abhi kar.* — *Sloka, Kabir.*  
“*agahan ku trangh pichha pher na mohadara, sijh aveha var.*” — *Var Maru. V.*
7. “*balihari gur apne... jinimanas te devte kie.*” — *Asa di var.*
8. *Brahmagiani paropkar umaha — Sukhmani. V.*
9. “*kalu aio re — nam bovaio, an rut nahi re mat bharqm bhulu.*” — *Asa. I.*
10. “*Jia re ola Nam ka, avar jo karan karavano tini main bhau hai jam ka.*
11. *Guru Nanak ke ghar keval nam hai.*
12. *Nanak nam chadhadi kala*
13. *bhar-iai mat papa ke sang, oha dhopai navai Ice rang — Japu*
14. *nami tull kicchu avar na hoi, Nanak gurmukh namu pavai janu koi — Sukhmani.*
15. *prabhu ke simran gian, dhian tatt budh. — Sukhmani*
16. *prabh kau simarahi se paropkari — Sukhmani*
17. *so surta, so baisno, so gian, jini bhajia bhagvant. — Gauri Thiti*
18. A. Bergaigne, *La Religion Vedique.*
19. *jiji gharu pavao vasa.*
20. *nijigharu mahil pavaho sukh sahije bahur na hoego phera, — Gauri V.*
21. *ram ram sabhko kahai, kahiai ram na hoe,*  
*gurprasadi ramu mani vasai tan phalu pavai koe. — Gauri.*
22. Patanjali, *Yogasutra*, II. 30.
23. *eka nari jati hoe par-nari dhi bhain vookhani — Bhai Gurdas*

*par nori ki saij bhul supne hu na jaio. — Baccittanatak.*

24. *Guru Granth; p. 322*

25. *so sevak seva kare jisnau hucam manaisi, hukmi maniai hovai parvanu ta khasmai ka mahil paisi. — Var. Asa.*

26. *bhakti karo prabhu ki nitnit, nirmal hoi tumharo cit. — Sukhmani*

27. *Ashtadhyayi, IV, iii, 95-98.*

28. *jisiantar prit lagae so mukta,... gur kai sabad sada hari dhiaie eha bhagati hari bhavana —Majh*

29. *“guru man maria kar sanjog, abinis ravai bhagatyog.”*

30. *mall karhala vadbhagia tu gian ratan sambal. — Gauri*

*gian anjan gur dia agian andher binas — Sukhmani*

31. *Wake up early in the morning, Hear the ding-dong ring. Go walking to the table, See the same damn thing.*

32. *“Yajna, hom, punn, tap, puja, dehi dukhi nit dukhu sabai, ramanam bin mukt na pavas mukt nam gurmukh lahai. — Bhairav*

33. *hun hukam hoa meharvan da,*

*pai koi no kisai rinjan do,*

*sab sukhali vutthian*

*hoa halemi raj jio.*

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SIKH THOUGHT

The basic problems of Sikh thought are naturally the same as those of other world religions and, as may be expected, their treatment by *Sikhism* is, in the main, on the lines of the Hindu and Buddhist speculative thought. Wherever Sikhism differs or departs from these lines of thought, it does so, as a rule, not by introducing new terms or concepts but by underlining an already familiar concept or by amplifying or interpreting it otherwise. This is, as it should be, for, thus alone it is possible to affect a new advance of expansion in the cultural and religious horizon of mankind and it is thus that all great cultures and civilizations have emerged and developed.

### THE UNIVERSE

We have already said that in Sikh thought, the final duality between the Matter and the Spirit is denied. The basic Sikh thought is strictly monistic :

“From One the Many emanate and finally into the One the Many submerge.”<sup>1</sup>

All that exists, whether in the form of phenomena and appearances, as Becoming, or as Numenon and Reality, as Being, is, in fact, the Spirit and the Mind, The individual mind, the numerous forms of life and the inanimate matter are all Spirit in different forms. Out of its own impulse and initiative of the Spirit a process of involutions occurred for some limited purpose, the precise nature of which is beyond human comprehension. All we can say is that such is its nature and such its pleasure. The fraction of the universe in its initial form, which the modern theorists, such as Abbe Lamatre (1904 - ) call, the Primeval Atom; resulted from the involutionary impulse of, the Absolute Spirit, God. In this Primeval Atom was originally concentrated, in a super-dense state, that which expanded and disintegrated, through an antithetical evolutionary impulse, for thousands of millions of years of the human mind, and finally into the universe as it is to-day. This eruptive, fissionary impulse, whereby the Primeval Atom has issued into the innumerable forms constituting the universe has reached its highest point, up-to-date, in the creation of man, and man, therefore, is the point in creation from where the inverse movement of evolution may take a further leap towards the Spirit. These two processes of involution and evolution, *apasarpani* and *upasarpani* as the profound ancient Jaina thought speculated, constitute a double but simultaneous movement and thus creation of the universe is an involution-cum-evolution process, a descent and an ascent. The universe, thus, is nothing but God in becoming. “The formless has become all the innumerable forms, Himself. He is beyond the attributes inhere. Nanak declares the doctrine of the one absolute Being, that is Becoming, for, the One indeed is the Many.”<sup>2</sup>

The main doctrines of Sikh theology are grounded in this view of the Ultimate Reality and its nature.

### GENESIS

With regard to the coming into being of the Primeval Atom, the Sikh doctrine is that the process was instantaneous, caused by the Will of God. “The forms become in consequence of the Divine Will. Comprehension fails at this stage of understanding of the Divine Will.”<sup>3</sup>

After thus stating the beginning of the Becoming, the further statements made in the Sikh scripture about the creation and evolution of the universe are remarkably akin to the picture which has now been adumbrated by scientific speculation after considering the data revealed by the recent advances in Observational Astronomy and probes into the heart of Matter. One of the basic hymns in the Sikh scripture, which may be called, the *Hymn of the Genesis*, says,

“Four thousands and thousands of Ages, and for millions and millions of aeons, there was

nothing in the beginning but nebulous density. Neither solids, nor spaces were there, only the Divine Impulse made become.

Neither the day nor night, neither galaxies and solar systems nor satellites, but only God, self-absorbed.

The atmospheres, the imprimis waters, the preconditions of all forms of life,  
And the sound, the protyle of all becoming, they too were not there.

There were no higher planes, middle regions or lower spaces, for the Space as yet was not there. And there was no all-consuming Time either. When God willed, He created the universes. The expanse was caused without a formal cause.

None knoweth His limits or limitlessness. 'The true Teacher revealeth this secret'.<sup>4</sup>

## MAN

Paul Tillich identifies man's basic predicament as existential estrangement from his essential being, estrangement which is expressed in anxiety about meaninglessness of life, gnawing awareness to alienation and incurable lack of wholeness, as his existential dilemma : "my bedstead of anxiety, strong with strings of pain and my cover quilt of alienation is my existential predicament. O, my God, take note of it and have mercy upon me."<sup>4a</sup>

Paul Tillich, the modern Western man, was not aware that in the Sikh scripture, not only the human predicament has been noted but the way to its cure has also been pointed out : Let man take refuge in God and proceed to cure his incurable sickness through identifying himself with God's purposes; "how else can man secure abiding peace and wholeness except through refuge in and communion with God"?<sup>4b</sup>

Man being the highest-yet point in the process of creation, where the evolutionary impulse has apparently near-exhausted its initial momentum, it is man on whom now the responsibility rests for consciously revitalising this impulse for a further evolutionary leap.

"Thou art the very essence of God. Therefore, know thyself as such."<sup>5</sup>

"The human body is the resting point of creation and it is from here that the further upward movement towards God realisation starts. Therefore, now make an all-out effort to reach the Goal and do not waste human life in frivolities".<sup>6</sup>

It is the involution-cum-evolution which is responsible for the creation of the universe and which after reaching the point of human consciousness has reached a stasis, and the man is thus a voluntary diminution of the infinitude of God, for some obscure but limited purpose, as, indeed, all forms of existence, represent a diminution of God. Since God is truth, knowledge, bliss, light, harmony and immortality, the involuted forms of creation are, so much less of all these. Man being the stage at which the evolution has emerged into self-consciousness, man is capable of knowing that he has reached a particular stage of the creative process, and he is capable, volitionally, of taking steps to evolve upwards to the next stage. This is the stage of the *brahmajnani*, or the God-conscious man, and it is to this notion of evolution, the premonition of which finds expression in the later 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century West European literature in the form of the concept of 'the Superman'. "Lo, I preach to you the Superman; Superman is the meaning of the earth," said Nietzsche. Again "Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman.. what is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal".<sup>7</sup> Sikhism agrees with this except that Sikhism declares that 'the meaning of the earth' reaches far beyond the stage of the Superman and Superman is only an interim stage 'a bridge and not a goal'. Sikhism endorses Nietzsche that the sphere of the activity of the Superman, and of the higher-still goal of the evolution, is 'the earth', in the sense that it is on this earth that a perfect human Society of God-conscious men, a psycho-social perfection, is the ultimate objective of the impulse of the God which has originally given rise to the process of creation. In contradistinction to all those and previous philosophies and religions, which taught that the ultimate goal of man was either absorption into God or entry into a supramundane Kingdom of God wherein there is abiding



propinquity to God, Sikhism urges man to divinise the whole of humanity on this earth by transforming, mind, life and matter, through a conscious effort and will, and with the aid of the spiritual technique of the Namyoga, which is capable of taking along the whole psyche of man to a level of existence, undreamed of before, where pure knowledge, limitless harmony and divine bliss would prevail. This indeed would be a Society of gods, and the ultimate purpose of the divine impulse of creation is the establishment of this Society of human gods in the terrestrial spheres of the universe. It is the teachings of the Sikh Gurus that the supreme duty of man is to make an all-out effort towards this divine goal and the Sikh Gurus not only point out this goal but also reveal the way towards it. "Hail, the Guru, a hundreds thousands times hail, for, he reveals the secret of transforming man into a god." <sup>8</sup>

## GOD

The Sikh concept of the ultimate reality is more akin to the Judaic notion of an Almighty Person than to the Aryan concept of an immanent neutral Principle. The basic formula of Sikh dogmatics is the opening line of the Sikh scripture which characterises the Ultimate Reality as follows :

"1. Being-Becoming. Truth; Numenon; Creator.  
 Person. Without feat of another. Without  
 animus towards another. Beyond Times,  
 Form. Unborn. Self-expression: Light.  
 Contacted by human mind through (His) Grace." <sup>9</sup>

## MAYA

The doctrine of Maya has been basic to the Hindu and Buddhist speculations from the very beginning. The best known work, apart from the omniscient, *Mahabhartā*, in which the term, 'maya' (relative truth) is employed as a philosophical concept, is the metrical treatise, *Karika*, by Gaudpad, where-in, unlike the *Mahabhartā* (*Bhagwadgita* XVIII. 61), the term is not taken for granted but is explained and defined. Since this name, Gaudpad, was borne by the teacher of the famous philosopher of Hindu monism, Samkara, the author of the *Karika* may be the same person who might have lived at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. This work, *Karika*, is usually printed with the *Mandukya-ōpanisad*, and for practical purposes, is regarded a part of it. In language and thought, both, it bears a remarkable resemblance to Buddhist writings of the *Madhyamik* School, and the criticism of the Hindu orthodoxy that the monism of Samkara, in which the doctrine of maya is embedded, is, in reality, crypto-Buddhism, is not without substance. <sup>10</sup> In the *Karika*, the world of appearances is compared to the apparent circle of fire produced by a whirling lighted torch. This striking image first occurs in the *Maitraana Upanisad* (VI. 24). It also occurs in the Buddhist Mahayan scripture, the *Lankāvarsutra*, which purports to be an account of the revelation of the true Religion of Guatama, the Buddha, when he visited Ceylon and there gave discourses to the King of the Island, Ravna, and his wife, Mahamati. This represents a well matured phase of speculation in Buddhism, as it criticises the Hindu schools of philosophy of the *Samkhya*, *Pasupat*, as well as other schools. It includes a prophecy about the birth of Nagarjuna, the great Buddhist savant of the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D., and it mentions the advent of Guptas which marks the renaissance of Hinduism in India. It also alludes to the fresh incursions of the Hunas into northern India which incursions destroyed the Imperial Gupta dynasty at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Throughout the Hindu speculative and religious literature ever since, this doctrine of maya is admitted as in some way an independent principle of the process and ontological structure of creation. True, the subtle Samkara asserts that the principle of maya is *aniravacani*, that is, it can neither be said to exist nor not to exist. A is neither A, nor not A. Whatever else this statement may mean, it does concede that maya has a positive existence. Sikhism

denies the doctrine of maya, thus conceived. As ignorance and nescience have no positive existence, they merely being the aspects of the self-limited involuted Spirit, likewise, maya, as such, has no positive existence. It is merely a way of saying that the individual consciousness perceives the reality only in the form of partial knowledge, which is there on account of involution. As the darkness is merely a negative aspect of the light of the sun, similar is the case with ignorance and nescience.

“What is there positive to which we can give the name of maya? What positive activity the maya is capable of?”

The human soul is subject to the pleasure and pain principle in its very nature as long as it operates on the individuated plane of consciousness.

Again, “maya, in the form of a snake, entwines to render human mind immiscible with the real and the more it is accepted at its face value the more it misguides. Rare indeed is such a man who overcomes and casts it away.” Further “what is maya except a befooling magic trick? Yea, a dry blade of grass afire, a passing shadow of a summer cloud, a momentary flooding after a tropical rain, for him who is out of communion with God” <sup>11</sup>

What do these dissertations on maya, in the Sikh scripture mean?

Maya is the antithesis of *moksha* in Hindu thought. But Maya is not the antithesis of absolute Reality. There is no incompatibility between the *brahma* and *maya*, for the former is not opposed to the Many? It is *advanda*, non-dual, that is, it has no opposite being outside all classification. To be precise ‘classification’ is exactly *maya*. *Maya* noun of Sanskrit is derived from the root *matr*, ‘to measure to form, to build, to layout a plan’, the same root from which Graeco-Latin words, ‘meter’ ‘matrix’ ‘material’ and ‘matter’ are obtained. The fundamental process of measurement is division. Thus the Sanskrit root, *dva*, from which we get ‘divide’, is also the Latin root of ‘dus’, and the English, ‘dual’. To say, then, that the world of ‘facts’ and ‘events’ is, *maya* is to say that the words, ‘facts’ and ‘events’ are terms of measurement rather than the real itself, *per se*. ‘Measurement’ is setting up bounds of all kinds whether by descriptive classification or by screening. Thus the ‘facts’ and ‘events’ are terms of measurement rather than the real itself, *per se*. Thus, the ‘facts’ and events are as abstract as lines of latitude or feet and inches, meters and centimeters. This is not to be confused with the “Idealism” or “Monism” of the Western Philosophy” for all concrete things are not, in reality, illusion, unreal, or just, the One they are not unreal and illusory, because *maya* is not-existence; it is a wrong mode of apprehension. It is not ‘One’, because ‘One’ is a thing, a mode of measurement and, therefore, itself maya. To join the ‘many’ into ‘one’ is as much maya as to separate the many from one. The world as we perceive it is made up of surfaces and lines, of areas of density and vacuity, but the ‘maya’ concept of the Sikh scripture says that these forms and appearances, these things and events have no “own-being”, *svabhava*; they do not exist in their own right but only in relation to one another, like “the spark of a dry blade of grass”, or like “the fleeting shadow of a summer cloud. Concretisation and formalisation is maya, when the human mind attempts to comprehend and control that which impinges upon his consciousness. This is the unreal world of Buddhism, the world of ‘name and form’, *nama-rupa*. When the Sikh scripture says that “maya is a snake which entwines human consciousness and whosoever takes it as its face-value, him the maya misleads and confuses”, means that man confuses his measures with the world so measured of identifying money with wealth, fixed convention with fluid reality. The Sikh doctrine of Maya points out the impossibility of grasping the actual world in the verbal net of man’s mind and the fluid character of those very constructions he thus artifacts. This world of maya escapes both the comprehension of the philosopher and the grasp of the pleasure-seeker like water from a clutching fist, “like the fleeting shade of a summer cloud”.

This interpretation, of the concept of maya Sikh technology has far-reaching consequences in so far as it pulls the Hindu mind out of the slough of indolent introspective pre-occupation, and subjectivism, generated by the belief that the whole world of the appearances in which man is born to pursue his socio-political life, is no more real than a phantasmagoria in the minds of the gods above. By giving a foundation of solid reality to the world of appearance, this re-interpretation of

the concept of *maya* conforms a sense of reality, a feeling of urgency and an objectivity to the whole frame of mind of man, which is necessary for the all-out effort to speed up the evolutionary process through the human will and this is the core of the precepts of Sikhism, as a way of life.

## ETHICS

The fact that religious experience, perse, is non-moral, has been known to Hindu thought from the very beginning. In the West, it has been recognised clearly only in recent times. It was, Dr. Otto who in his, *Idea of the Holy*, about a quarter of a century ago, made this point finally clear. In the Judaic religious tradition, for all practical purposes, religious life and ethical conduct appear to have been made identical. The ten Commandments of Moses are ethical precepts. In the Koran, it is these ethical commands which are presented as the essence of religion. Western scholars are sometimes shocked at the stories narrated in the ancient Hindu texts, of the conduct of gods that does not conform with strict ethical standards and about which the narrator of the story expresses no moral horror and passes no censorial judgement. From this, the Western reader erroneously concludes that ethics has no place in the Hindu religious practice and tradition. This is far from the truth. From the very beginning, it has been recognised that ethical conduct is the very foundation on which the life of a religious man must be based. The rules of conduct of the Buddhist shramans, the formulary of conduct of Jain *bhikshus*, the daily rules regulating a Brahmin's life bear ample testimony to the fact that the relation of ethics to religious experience is well recognised and established, though a man with secular sovereign status is exempted from moral censure.<sup>12</sup> This moral exemption, however, is more a juridical rule rather than a moral precept. The case of non-human gods, though is obviously on a different law. In Sikhism, while it is recognised that the religious experience belongs to a category of value which has a unique status and ontological structure in its own right, it is, nevertheless, insisted that without strictly ethical purity of conduct there is no possibility of any advance in the religious experience. A religious life, not strictly grounded in ethical conduct or a religious discipline which ignores the ethical requirements is considered as a highly damaging error. "The seed of the teachings of the Guru cannot germinate except in the field of ethical conduct, constantly irrigated by the waters of truth".<sup>13</sup> "A man of religion is ever characterised by ethical deeds, honest living, sincerity of heart, and a fearless passion .for truth"<sup>14</sup> "Nanak maketh this emphatic declaration, let all men ponder over it. Ethical conduct is the only true foundation of human life on earth"<sup>15</sup> Sikhism, thus, lays a stress on morality which raises the moral law to a higher and absolute status such as was not so in the Hindu and Buddhist thought.

The Buddhist and Brahmanic systems appear to assume tacitly that morality is a means to felicity and it is not obedience to a law which exists in its own right as demanding obedience, what Immanuel Kant called, the Categorical Imperative. It is true that by them moral conduct is regarded as governed by the cosmic law, called, the law of Karma, which means that good deeds bring good results and evil deeds bring evil results. "The evil deeds I did in past lives have now become impediments and misfortunes for me"<sup>16</sup> Sikhism, however, raises ethical conduct to a higher and more independent, absolute status and makes it as the true expression of the harmony of human personality with the Will of God. All ethical conduct, therefore, is not merely conducive to good results such as happiness, but it is primarily, an act of establishment of concord between the human personality and the Person of God. Since this concords the highest end and the goal of human existence and endeavour, it is, therefore, the basic ingredient of the highest activity of man which is religion. Thus, Sikhism while recognising that the order of Reality which is revealed as numenon to the human experience does not fall under the category of ethical experience, it unequivocally emphasizes that the two cannot be divorced or separated and that the nature of the numenon is such that its realisation is impossible without ethical conduct. The ethical category. and the numenal category are distinct but are structurally and inseparably joined.

In this way, the Sikh thought fuses the Hindu thought and the semitic tradition on the subject of ethics and religion.

## FREE WILL

European philosophy and theology have been much exercised on the subject of the 'free will' while the Hindu tradition has considered this subject as of minor importance. The explanation for this lies in the analytical understanding of the concept by both the traditions. In European thought, an individual is conceived of as a permanent fixed entity, basically separate from the rest of the world which is his universe. It is argued that without freedom of will there is no moral responsibility and if there is no moral responsibility, there can neither be guilt nor punishment, either in society or hereafter, before the throne of God. This problem has not much troubled the Hindu thought which considers that there is no such thing as a completely and stable entity, called, 'the individual' and secondly, the Hindu argues, that if the human will is not free then what does the term "freedom", mean? What instance shall we bring forth with which to contrast the supposed determination of the human will? Our notion of "freedom" is inalienably derived from our own experience to which we give the name of "will". Whatever, therefore, we may mean by "freedom", it is ultimately in the terms of our experience of our own 'will', that we give meaning to it. Thus interpreted, to say that human will is free is an axiom, as well as a tautology. There is no meaning in the thesis that human will is not free, for, "free" is that which is like unto the human will. The trouble, however, arises when we give to the expression, "free will", a meaning which we have not derived from our experience of our 'will' but which have been superimposed by our intellect. Thus we like to think that, "free will" is that power of volition of the human individual which is totally uncaused and unconditioned. The concept of 'self-caused inevitability' and 'freely chosen determinism' would appear as puzzling, if no, altogether non-sensical to the western mind. A little reflection, however, will show that such a "freedom" does not, and cannot, in fact, exist and further, that, if it did and could exist, it will destroy all foundations of 'moral responsibility', 'sense of guilt' and justification for 'punishment' either here or hereafter. To begin with, there are the facts of heredity, the environment, and the subconscious mind. There is not much doubt that the individual is the product of his heredity, the inner mechanism of which the science of biology has discovered recently in the fertilized germ-cells and its genes, which make all the organic cells that make up the body including the brain and the nervous system. This pattern we inherit from our parents and our ancestors and it is certainly a determination of the choices that we make in our lives from time to time. Psychology has revealed to us that sub-conscious layers of human mind as the seat of instincts, emotions, and intuitions, for those who faithfully follow the dogma of the Church Council of Constantinople (553 A.D.) which anathematised the doctrine of transmigration, in the race during evolution of millions of years, or, accumulated, for those who hold the doctrine of metempsychosis as fundamental, accumulated in the course of untold numbers of previous births and rebirths of the individual. They are certainly a determinant throughout a man's life in the matter of his choice and the conduct that follows it. Again, from outside the social environment is active in continuously influencing and moulding individual's mind and thereby his power of choice and conduct. These three factors, the physical, the environmental and the hereditary are there as a fact and their powers of influencing the human power of choice cannot be denied. In this sense there cannot be a 'free will', as an uncaused and unconditioned factor which solely determines as to what choice, in a given situation, an individual will make. But even if there were such a "free" will, it will entail disastrous consequences. If a man's actions are not free when they can be shown to be casually chained to his character, the sum total of his heredity, past experiences and environment, then the only circumstances in which it would be proper to call a man "free", would be those in which he acted independently of his received character, that is, of his habits, desires, urges, and perspective on life and all the rest. But if this agent or 'free' action, is not to be equated and identified with that which is

subject to particular desires and urges, which is circumscribed by a given environmental and circumstantial set-up, which is devoid of character, motives persistent interests and the like, then who is this agent of 'free' choice, the 'he' ? Such a notion of 'free' will completely dissolves the agent of action; a person with such a 'free' will is a completely disembodied and unidentifiable entity. Such an entity can neither be blamed nor praised. Indeed, such an entity would be truly like the "Superman" of Nietzsche, "beyond good and evil." Nor can such an entity be held responsible for what it does, for, it would be clearly unreasonable to hold an individual responsible for his actions if we did not think there was a cause and effect connection between his character and his conduct. When we can show that there is no such connection, as, for instance, an act is committed as a result of coercion, we do not normally hold him responsible. The reason is not that the one act is 'uncaused' and 'free', while the other is 'determined', the reason lies in the kind of the cause, in the one case the cause lies in the character of the individual over which he has, in some sense, control while in the other case, he has no such control. As we gain new knowledge about the kinds of causes that affect conduct, we change our mind about the kinds of behaviour for which we should hold men responsible. The recent shifts of stress in the science of Penology in the modern world, and the ancient wisdom of the East and West, which iterated that an individual is ultimately responsible for nothing, must be appreciated in the context of this analysis, and not in the superfinal frame of reference of 'determinism' and 'free will'. "A man reaps only that what he sows in the field of Karma", <sup>17</sup> declares the Sikh scripture. It simultaneously says, that, "Say, what precisely it is that an individual can do out of his free choice? He acteth as the God willeth". <sup>18</sup> And the *Bhagvadgita* asserts that, "God sits in the heart of every creature with the consequence that all revolve in their set courses, helplessly tied to the wheel of maya." <sup>19</sup> That man is free to choose and act to some extent, and to the extent that he is so, to that extent alone he is morally responsible and subject to praise and blame, is a true statement. That there is no such entity, and no such entity is conceivable, which is wholly 'uncaused' and 'undetermined', and further that in the ultimate analysis, the whole area of individuality can be linked to a cause or causes which are supra-individual is also a true statement, and these two true statements are not self-contradictory or incompatible with each other, constitutes the Sikh doctrine on the subject.

This brings us back to our immediate experience that seems to carry its own certitude with it, that, in some sense, we are 'free', for, we have the notion of 'freedom' as the core of this experience. Sikhism while implicitly taking note of the three factors which determine the powers of human choice, lays stress on this fourth factor, perpetually present and operative in the human mind, which possesses the autonomous power of choice. This autonomous power of choice is, the divinity in man, according to Sikhism and it is this core around which the whole human personality, which is, at heart, the source of all human misery, as well as the panacea of all his ills". <sup>20</sup> "How may man demolish the wall of nescience that separates him from God ? By being in tune with the Will of God. And how shall we know the Will of God. Nanak answers : It is embedded in the very core of human personality." <sup>21</sup>

It is this autonomous power of free choice which is given to every human personality and by virtue of which the effects of the other three determining factors of human choice are interfused, and, thus, the act of free human choice gives birth to a new event which is not wholly determined, and which is not mere combination and aggregational consequence of all these four factors, but which is a new event, unique in nature, and potently capable of giving rise to other similar events in the future. It is this power of free choice that is included in man's original heritage which has the capacity to go beyond this heritage and thus, within the limits given, a human being is free to shape his own destiny. Nor are the other three factors, his received character, the individual circumstances, are merely accidental and fortuitously super-imposed upon the individual, for, they too are the fruits of his past Karma of uncounted previous births, and thus they are self-determined, self-caused, result of free choices earlier made. When and why and how did an individual make the first free but wrong choice ? This question relates to, the First Things, and therefore, *exhypothesis*, the individual

comprehension fails at this point: “the son observeth and knoweth not the birth of his father”.<sup>22</sup>

## KARMA

The doctrine of Karma is not the same as the doctrine of pre-destination of the Christian theology. Karma is, in a sense, fate, self-caused inevitability not pre-destination, for, within the limits given, and these limits constitute the Karma inherited from the previous births, a man is free. This Karma is not ‘fate’ because all the time we are making our own karma and determining the character of our further status and births. The doctrine of Karma as understood in higher Hinduism, and as expounded in Sikhism, merely, teaches that our present limitations are traceable to our acts of autonomous choice in our past lives and as such our Karma is a source of rewards and punishments which we must enjoy and endure, but this idea differs from the idea of ‘fate’, as commonly understood in European thought, in as much as it is not inexorable, for all the time we are making our own Karma within a context, the core of which is always free and autonomous.

## EVIL

The existence of evil it might be said, is the main reason for the keen interest of religion and, therefore, the explanation of evil is the chief problem of theologies and religious philosophies. Whether it was God who created evil and whether evil is due to misuse of the gifts of free will, are problems which constantly occur and recur in almost all religions of the world. But the presence of evil, as a de-tranquiliser and disturber of the composure of human mind cannot be ignored or argued away, so much so that perceptive minds regard it as the preponderant characteristic of existential human situation.<sup>23</sup>

The main trend of Hindu thought on this problem is that since the world itself is unreal, the existence of evil in it is not of greater concern to the individual than the world itself. He asserts that the proper course for the human soul is to seek *mukti*, liberation or unison with God by renouncing and discarding this vain show of appearances, called, the world. The Hindu, thus is not very much concerned to prove that evil does not really exist in the world, or to explain why God allows it to exist. Since the world itself is no more than a phantom and an insubstantial dream the evil itself cannot be of a more enduring substance, and, at any rate, it is of no direct concern to the man of religion.

Sikhism cannot and does not adopt this view, because Sikhism does not accept the ultimate dichotomy of the matter and the spirit, and does not accept as an independent entity, the principle of illusion the maya. Since Sikhism postulates that religious activity must be practised in the socio-political context of the world, the problem of evil is a very much real problem to Sikhism as it is to the European thinker. Sikhism, therefore, therefore almost returns the same answer to the problem of evil which the European pantheist gives, namely, that since God is all things and in all things, the evil is only something which is a partial view of the whole, something which appears as such when not seen from the due perspective. Sikhism asserts that there is no such thing as the independent principle of evil, as some theologies postulate, although there are things in this world which are evil. This antithesis of evil and good, according to Sikhism, is a necessary characteristic of the syndrome involution involved in process of creation of the world. Evil and good appear at one stage of this involution-cum-evolution and they disappear when the process of evolution culminates into the unitive experience of God, just as the white ray of light splits into its variegated spectrum while passing through a prism, and again gathers these multi-chromatic hues into its all-absorbing whiteness, when it becomes itself again. In the final stage of things, “all evil transmutes itself into good and all defeat into victory”. When a complete perspective is granted to man by the Grace of God, all evil melts into its source which is All-Good<sup>24</sup> “There is no independent principle of evil in the universe because God is All-Good and nothing that proceeds from All-Good can be really evil,

and there is naught, which proceeds from any other source but God.”<sup>25</sup>

But this Sikh metaphysical speculation on the ontological status of Evil, does not supply a clear cut answer to the problem of evil as man encounters it in his everyday experience and life.

Ours is a time of upheaval political, social, religious, and moral; our most urgent problem is to forestall the catastrophe that menaces us, catastrophe of total destruction, and unprecedented unrest and violence. The causes of the present troubles and future dangers can all be traced back to the lack of any root-principles, generally agreed in philosophy, religion and politics. Everywhere old class structures of society have been undermined by the advent of democracy. European hegemony and overlordship in Asia and Africa has yielded place to independence or partnership. In religion the simple faith in the ancient theologies, and in their sacred writings as the explanation of universe and as the foundation and sanction of morals has been shaken by the impact of modern science. Civilisation has been disadjusted and confusion prevails. Mass opinion is agreed that the present age is mostly concerned not with the world of ideas but with the world of things, material things that we make and use, sell and buy; Though physical sciences, technology and economics are of immense value to mankind, it is not anywhere in that world that we may hope to find the solution to our problems, and that solution, whatever it might be, lies in the world of ideas. Men's actions are determined by their ideas and not vice versa as fanatical Marxists fondly hope and obstreperously assert. Right ideas are those that lead to good actions and good actions are those that are known to lead to welfare. Wrong ideas are those that lead to opposite results, suffering and disaster. Welfare means everything worthwhile material, intellectual, moral and spiritual welfare.

To discover wherein welfare consists and to find ways to attain it, constitutes a continuous enquiry, discussion, study meditation and argument. Thus, the ancient problem of evil is reopened and the explanation of it that monotheistic theologies give, namely, to argue it away at the transcendental level, appears unsatisfying : the two world-wars of our times, for instance. If God is omnipotent and benevolent, why are there wars? The answer that the ontological status of Evil is negative and non-existent or the answer implicated in the Book of Job, constitute impressive argument and a magnificent poem, respectively but in the face of the concrete evil, the latter appears a sterile philosophy and the former an evasion, but no straight answer. In the case of a dualistic theology that concedes two real and positive opposing Powers, the Good and the Evil, it would appear that if God has created a maleficent power, the Power of Evil of negation and denial, then the God is not all benevolent, but if this Power is coequal and co-existent then the God is not all powerful. The problem of Evil may be a mere abstraction, but there are problems of evil every day, tangible and concrete situations and they raise not merely the philosophical questions about the status and origin of evil, but also what is the moral imperative for man, in dealing with evil situations, day to day life.

Sikhism takes direct and full cognisance of this aspect of the problem, while it denies Evil an ultimate status in the structure of Reality, it squarely faces the concrete existence of evil in the day to day life of man, as well as the agents of evil in human affairs.

“The cannibals say ritual prayers of Islam and the assassins strut about as practising Hindus .... All concern for human decencies and respect for ethical conduct has disappeared and the Evil rules supreme.”<sup>26</sup>

Sikhism calls upon all men of moral perception and spiritual awakening to oppose the agents of evil, the evil doers and their aides singly, through appropriate organisation, to oppose relentlessly, till the end, till this evil is destroyed or contained. The Light of God, that shone through the Sikh Prophets, to guide mankind is unambiguous and uncompromising on this point : “O, God of Benedictions, this blessing above all, we do ask of you : the will and tenacity to tread the path of good promoting actions and fearlessness in opposition to the agent of evil.”<sup>27</sup> “The Light of Sikhism is for the supreme purpose of urging men to destroy and extirpate evil doers.”<sup>28</sup>

But, since according to Sikh metaphysics, the evil is just a passing phase, a phenomenal occurrence, neither there in the beginning nor there at the end and, therefore, having no substance

or real existence why should any man of understanding bother to oppose it or to destroy or contain it ?

Sikhism answers this question. The ancient Hindu insight into the scientific laws governing character formation tells us that, “what a man does, what he attitudinises, that he becomes”.<sup>29</sup> To tolerate evil, to coexist with it and not to confront it is to accept and compromise with it. Such acceptance and compromise is antivirtuous passivity and negative life-style and the destiny of ethical and spiritual negation is hell. A negative personality is a naked personality, in the absence of a proper covering of virtue and merit, there is no more frightful fate that can over take man: “On its pre-destined march towards hell, a naked soul looks truly frightful.”<sup>30</sup>

Jacob Boehme in his, *Signatura Rerum*, tells us that

“What is evil to one thing, that is good to another. Hell is evil to the angels for they are not created thereunto, but it is good to the hellish creatures. So also heaven is evil to the hellish creatures, for, it is their poison and death.”

Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) wrote in his, *Heaven and Hell*:

“No punishment is from the Lord, but from Evil itself; because Evil is so joined with its own punishment that they cannot be separated.”

By co-existence and non-confrontation with evil things man is utterly degraded from his essential humanity, and becomes a hellish creature and thus his punishment is great.

“Fall and rise, rottenness and ripeness are known and seen hereafter in the next world.”<sup>31</sup>

## NUMENON AND SAMBAR, OR THE REALITY AND APPEARANCE

Samsar is the principle of change, which determines the world of phenomena and in Hindu thought and in some other systems of metaphysics, it has been argued that on this account it is unreal. It is presumed as axiomatic that the real must not be infected with change. The basic formula of Sikh dogmatism, with which the Sikh scripture opens is preceded by the exegetic statement that “all change, all evolution, all that is characterised by the time-process, is ultimately real.”<sup>32</sup>

The numenon, the order of Reality, which is revealed to the human mind through gnosis therefore, is not something which is fundamentally different and away from the phenomenon, altered in the gnosis is not that what really is, but it is the mode of perception and the quality of prehension of the individual, which is transformed, thus revealing the vision of the numenon. It is this very mundane and the material world and the phenomena which is freshly and differently prehended and cognised by the human consciousness, a consciousness that is enlarged and uplifted. Sikhism, therefore, is in agreement with the aphorism of the great Buddhist philosopher, Budhagosa who declared, that, “*yas-samsaras tan-nirvanam*”, that is, “the flux and the absolute are the same.” “This world of fleeting appearances that you see, is, in fact, the true face of God and as such it is revealed to the consciousness of emancipated man.”<sup>33</sup>

1. *ikkas te hoio ananta, Nanak ikkas mahi samae jio.* — Majh

2. *nirankar akar apu nigrun sargun ek, ekahiek bakhanano Nanakek* — Gauri, Bavanakheri.

3. *“bukmi hovan akar buknm na kabia jai.”*

4. *arbad narbad dhundhukara, dharnima gagna hukam apara, na dinu rain; na candu no surja sunnasamadhi lagaida. Khani no bani paunna pani, opati khapti na avanjani, khand patal sapt nahi sagar nadi na niru vahaida, no tadi suragu macch piala, dojaku bhisatu nahi khaikala ..... ja tisu bhana ta jagata upaia, bajh kala adani rahaiya ... Taka antu na janai koi, pure gur te sojhi hoi* — Maru, Sohile

4a. *cint khatola van dukh birbon vacchavan laif. ihu hamara jivana tu sahib sacce dekh.* -Slok-Farid

4b. *binu hari kat paie bisram ?*

5. *man tu jotsarup hain apna mul pachhan.* — Asa

6. *bhai prapat manukhadeburia, gobind milan ki eho teri baria saranjami lagu bhavjalu tarankai, janamu birtba*



*jat rangi mayakei — Asa*

7. *Thus spake Zarathustra, I. 4.*

8. *balibari gur apne diohari sadvar, jini manas te devte kie karat na lagi bar. — Var Asa.*

9. 1. *Onkar, Satu, Namu, Karta, Purukhu, Nirbhau. Nirvaira, Akal. Murti Ajuni Saibhang. Gur Prasadi.*

10. *mayavadam asachhastram, prachhannam bauddham. — Padam-purana*

11. *“maya kishnau akhiye ? kia maya karam kamai ? dukh sukh iba jio baddh hai haumai karam kamai.”*

*maya hoi nagani jagati rahi laptae, is ki seva jo kare tisi hi ko phir kahe, koi gurmukh garadu (tini malidali laee pau.)*

*“mai maya chhal; trin ki agan, megh ki chhaya Gobind bhajan binu had kaja. — Guru Granth Sahib*

12. *samrath ko nabin dos gusain. — Tulsi, Ramcaritmanas*

13. *amal ki dharti bij sabdo kar sace ki ab nit deha pani — Srirag*

14. *Sac karni sac taki rahit, sac hirdai sac mukhi kahit — Sukhmani*

15. *bhagar Nanak bujhe ko bicarci, issi jag mahi karni sari — Sorath*

16. *purva janamam kritam papam byadhi rupen pitadam — samgrah*

17. *jeha bijai so lunai karma sandra khet — Baramaha*

18. *Kahu Manukh te kia hoe ave? jo tisi bhav soi karave. — Sukhmani*

19. *Ishvrah sarvbbutanam brideso Arjun. nishtoti, bhramayan, sarvabhutani yantrasudhani maya. — XVIII. 61*

20. *haummain diragh rog hai daru bhi is mahi. — Var Asa*

21. *kie sachhara hoiai kie kude tuttai pal? hukamrajai callana Nanak likhai nal — Japu*

22. *pita ka janam kai janai put — Sukhmani*

23. *Therefore, since the world has still*

*Much good, but much less good than ills*

*And while the sun and the moon endure*

*Luck's a chance but trouble is sure*

*I'd face it as a wise man should,*

*And train for ill and not for good. — Houseman, A.E.*

24. *Guru Granth; p. 1302.*

25. *isu te hoe su nahi bura, orai kabahu kinai kachhu kara. — Sukhmani*

26. *manas khane karahi nivaj churi vagayin*

*tin gal tag ..... saram dharam ka beda dur,*

*Nanak kud rahiya bharpur. — Asa, Var*

27. *deha siva bar mohi illai subh karman te kabahun*

*na taraon, no daraon, ari te jab jae laraon. — Dasamgranth*

28. *eha kaj dhara ham janamam .... dust sabhnn kau mul ukparan. — ibid ,*

29. *yatha karl yatha cari tatha bhavati.*

30. *nanga dojak calia ta disai khara draona — Asa Var*

31. *kacc pakai othe pai, Nanak gaia jape jae. — Japu*

32. *adi sacu, jugadi sacu, hai bhi sacu, Nanak, hosi bhi sacu. — Japu .*

33. *ihu visu sansar tum dekhde ehu hari ka rup hai harirup nadri aia. — Ramkali*

## CHAPTER V

### SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF SIKHISM

The life story of Guru Nanak, called, the *Janamsakhi* the earliest written record we have of the travels and wanderings of the Guru, records that Guru Nanak summed up the Sikh tenets, for his audience in the following triple precepts:

*kirat karo, wand chhaka, nam Japo*

It means, (1) Earn thy livelihood by honest productive labour, (2) Share the fruits of thy labour, and (3) Practice the Discipline of the Name.

These are rightly regarded as the basic doctrines of Sikhism.

We have already explained, in brief, the significance of the Discipline of the Name and its import for the man of religion. This discipline of the Name, a new synthesized and integrated Yoga, is to be practiced in the context of socio-political life in which man does not turn his back on the society and does not renounce the world. The first two precepts, that of honest productive work and sharing of its fruits with neighbours are to constitute the foundation of the Sikh society, while the remaining third is to vitalise and regenerate it.

Sikhism envisages a time, almost within sight now, when the heritages of the different historic nations, civilisations, peoples, and religions will have coalesced into a common heritage of the whole human family, and Sikhism further declares that neither the natural sciences, nor philosophical intellectual speculations which integrate the basic concepts of natural sciences into comprehensive systems, can rescue man from his state of inherent limitation and suffering and that the religious discipline of the Name alone can do it.

“Even if a hundred moons arise and a thousand suns shine together, this light combined cannot dispel the nescience with which man is afflicted and which the light of God, that is the revealed Light alone can dispel and destroy”.<sup>1</sup>

The words, “sun” and “moon”, have been used in this text in the idiom set by the Veda, for the Vedas imprint upon Hindu mind is permanent and unmistakable, even on those who represent a reaction against Vedism. Vedism is not only a religion, it is even more a technique, a technique of learned theologians and inspired poets, *vipra*, “the quivering ones”, and it constitutes also the *mimamsa*, the jurisprudence of the *yajna*, the ritual act. Vedism has also developed a number of secular disciplines, such as Phonetics, Grammar, Astronomy, and even rudiments of Geometry and Law. *Nirghantus* is the oldest lexicon in any Indo-European language wherein the words are grouped as series of synonyms. These synonyms, are so arranged as a rule to indicate secondary metaphysical acceptations, *slesha*, constituted and arrived at in accordance with the laws of occult equivalences. In the Veda, the word employed are multivious, polysignificant, and that is why the Vedic idiom is described as *vakrokti*, “crooked”, and for this reason the *nirukta* commentary says that, *proksa kamahi devah*, ‘the gods are in love with the cryptic’. It is in this sense that the Rigveda declares (X.90.13) that, “the moon took birth in the mind and the sun in the eyes (of Cosmic Man)”.<sup>2</sup> The metaphysical correlation and occult equivalence of ‘moon’ and that of the ‘sun’, the percipience, the facts revealed through perception. In our text the “moon” signifies the integrating speculations, the speculative cogitations of the mind, that result in philosophic systems, based on the stuff of the basic concepts and hypotheses of the natural sciences. Likewise, the term “sun” here means the objective natural sciences, the knowledge of which is derived through the human senses.

In the semetic-Judaic religions, the religion is equated with the ‘law’, reduced into dead letters of utilitarian ethics. Sikhism emphasises that the ‘ethical law’ the decalogue of Christianity, the *sunna* of Islam and the *karamkand* of Vedism and *Smriti* injunctions of Brahmanism, is not religion proper, that the core of religion is the numenon, sacredness in the sense of holiness as a category of value and a slate of mind and a spiritual experience, peculiar to religion and exclusive to man, but that the

ethical law is, in some deep profound sense, a necessary adjunct of religious life and a penumbra of the religious experience. It, therefore, insists on these three precepts as necessary ingredients of the life of man who would practise religion.

To begin with, therefore, in the society which Sikhism recommends as the pattern for the global society, every individual must engage himself in honest productive labour. Parasitism, which is the obverse of exploitation, in any shape or form, is not only anti-social, but anti-religious also. It follows, also that there shall be no exploitation of man by man with Capital or spi or spiovery, i.e. the accumulated wealth shall not be employed as the instrument of exploitation and there shall be no privilgentia based on the white collar and the gift of the gab. This is a necessary implication of the precept that religious man must share the fruits of his labour with his neighbour by renouncing self-aggrandizement.

From this it follows, that Sikhism regards a cooperative society as the only truly religious society.

How is this Sikh co-operative society distinguished from the modern models of a socialist society, a welfare society, and a communist society?

The basic element which distinguishes a Sikh cooperative society from all these modern social models is grounded in the Sikh view of the worth and status of the individual as the very microcosm of God, and an individual, therefore, must never be imposed upon, coerced, manipulated or engineered.

“If thou wouldst seek God, demolish and distort not the heart of any individual”<sup>3</sup> “I worship God to be freed from all adversatives hostile to the light of God within myself.”<sup>4</sup>

Herein lies that which essentially distinguishes a religious cooperative society as conceived by Sikhism from the modern societies that are grounded in the doctrines of socialism, communism and welfarism.

A welfare state is based, primarily, on four precepts, Firstly, it accepts collective responsibility for providing all individuals with equality of opportunity. This implies, among other things, availability of adequate educational facilities, universally, Secondly, a welfare state assumes responsibility for the basic economic security of those, who are unable, to provide such security for themselves. This implies disabled youth and old age pensions, wage legislation and un-employment insurance. Thirdly, it assumes responsibility for reducing permanent disparity in distribution of wealth and bringing about a closer coincidence between the income of an individual and his contribution to society. In a welfare society, the policy of taxation and budgetary trends are primarily determined by this consideration. Fourthly, a welfare society assumes responsibility for promoting full employment of the available manpower and the full utilisation of the national resources, whether in the form of man power, or in the form of the material wealth. It will be seen that all these four objectives on which the concept of a welfare state is based are interdependent and that when one objective is accepted, the others, logically or otherwise follow. It is implicit in a society which is organised as a welfare state that, the extent of obligation of the state to provide the individual with facilities, is also the extent of the power of the state over the freedom and autonomy of the individual as a social unit. Briefly, slavery is the necessary price for security, when security is given by an external authority and is not acquired and maintained, primarily by the individual himself. It is with this implication of the welfare state that Sikhism finds serious fault. Sikhism is not antiwelfare. In fact, it insists that the welfare of an individual mainly consists in the welfare of his neighbours. What Sikhism opposes basically and uncompromisingly is, the creation of a class of men beset with the sins of bureaucracy and arrogance of meritocracy, who in the name of the state and in the name of the social welfare seize and retain such power which can be and is, more often than not used to coerce and impose upon the individual. Somebody has well quipped : ‘I would never fool with the government. By the time they get around to solving a problem, the guy has either solved it himself or has died.’ This is the bureaucratic sin of procrastination. The other sin of overweening tyranny is capsuled in the Punjabi folk-wisdom : ‘never walk to near the hind legs of a

mule or within sight of a bureaucrat'. Again, welfarism is essentially a project for 'levelling up' and 'levelling up' is a mode of tyranny. Aristotle tells us that Periander of Corinth did not confine himself to lopping off the outstanding and the proud men, he destroyed the twin emotions of pride and confidence among the people, which process, as a side-effect, ostracises the honest and the men of integrity. Aristotle also names the three main aims of tyranny, to keep the subjects humble, to have them distrust each other and to render them powerless for political action. Thus, welfarism has a built-in tendency to bring about depravement and demoralisation of an entire people.

Sikhism, therefore, envisages a social organisation in which the welfare activities of the State are not a result of coercion and imposition from outside but instead result and follow from a transformation, possible through genuine religion only, of the basic attitudes of the individual, which transformation progressively destroys narrow selfishness in him such as is inconsistent with the welfare of the society as a whole. Sikhism does not view tolerantly any arrangement or organisation in which a desire for universal power can raise its head to demand that which is beyond its scope. Sikhism would support Pascal when he says : "These expressions are false and tyrannical, 'I am fair, therefore, I must be feared', 'I am strong, therefore, I must be loved', 'I am indispensable, therefore, I must be retained'. It is for this reason that Sikhism would not countenance the creation of a welfare state through the coercive apparatus of the state.

The basic objection Sikhism has to a Communist society, or to a socialist society is in principle the same. The ideals of socialism, as a theory are embodied in the ideas of equality, freedom and fellowship. A socialist state is a state which translates these moral ideas into the economic life of its citizens, to man, both, as a consumer and a producer. It is here that the basic disease arises. To translate these eminently desirable ends into action, coercive means of necessity have to be devised and the agency for it is the state. State is merely an abstract term, and not a supra-individual entity as Hegel thought and taught, which thought has become the corner-stone of the modern socialist and communist societies. It is when the apparatus of the state comes to fall into the hands of a class of citizens, who then tend to consolidate themselves into a permanent and self-perpetuating layer of the society, that those characteristics of modern socialist societies arise to which Sikhism is basically opposed. Most of the modern political theories, whether those of socialism or of welfarism tacitly assume the legitimacy of the concept of state as a supra-individual entity to which obedience of the individual is due and for which an individual may be sacrificed. This assumption is the root cause of the tyrannies which are anathema to Sikhism, for, those who suspect socialism as a bridge to totalitarianism are not altogether mistaken as the realities of contemporary world show. Socialists are impressive verbal champions of freedom, but their actions destroy freedom. With increasing state ownership and control over the economy, Trotsky's warning will come true: "Formerly, the rule was that he who does not work shall not eat, but now the rule is, he who does not obey shall not eat."

It is by no means an altogether modern notion that the state constitutes a power which is supra-individual and that, therefore, the autonomy of the individual can be subordinated to it, and the individual may himself be sacrificed to it as a mere means. The ancient notion of the divine right of the kings to rule, is the real seed out of which the Hegelian concept of the state has grown. Amongst the Hindus, in particular, and in all Asiatic classical societies, in general, there has always been a sentiment of uncritical subservience to the authority of the state. Whatever the doctrine behind this attitude, whether it was that "the King was the human god on earth", <sup>5</sup> or whether that the individual person himself was only a confection, <sup>6</sup> a fleeting amorphous entity, not entitled to any serious attention, as the Buddhists said, and thus the individual, as such, could claim no right, it is difficult to believe, in the case of the Hindus, for instance, that the Muslim conquerors from the Central Asia, with their completely alien culture and small invading hordes, could have imposed themselves for centuries on the vast Hindu population without this feeling of uncritical subservience to the state. Equally, it is impossible, that the Britishers could have maintained themselves as the rulers of India, for a century and a half, with the aid of a tiny garrison of foreign troops, if this

psychological basis for mass acquiescence in acceptance of the state authority, had not already existed. It is this psychological basis which is, and is bound to remain for a long time to come, the main strength of the present or future ruling parties in India. Marquis of Hastings, as Governor General of India, in one of his Dispatches to the Home authorities in England, wrote in AD. 1824 that,

“there is nothing humiliating in our rule, since a paramount power has been for centuries, a notion so familiar that its existence remains almost indispensable”.

There is something in the point which Lord Hastings has made in this observation. The paramount power, whether British or Muslim, could sustain itself only because it was able to rely on the continued loyalty and efficiency of an administrative machine which, mostly must always be manned by the subject and subjugated Hindus themselves. It appears that from the earliest times, Hindus have tended to regard the state power as, *maibap* i.e. ‘mother-and-father’ the pater-familias, because of the organised work that could be done only by the State agency to secure the water-supply to grow food crops. It must have been obvious and clear to these ancient settled agricultural communities of the Hindus that, without the authority of the state, which alone could construct water-dams and dig and maintain canals, most of them would starve to death. It will be seen, on a closer reflection, that these are precisely the considerations, which in a welfare state, generate the psychological atmosphere in which a class of rulers imposes itself upon the citizens, and the citizens un-critically acquiesce in this imposition as a necessary pre-condition to the welfare which this class guarantees. This psychological attitude was, apparently, further reinforced by a high authoritarian Hindu caste-system and thus, the special Hindu attitude of subservience to the state authority, as *maibap*, arose and has become a near-permanent of the national character. It is not difficult to see that without this Hindu attitude, whether it arises and is sustained by the considerations out of which it originally arose amongst them, or whether it is justified by the modern doctrines and ideas of socialism and welfarism, the modern states which go under the name of socialist and welfare societies are most difficult, if not altogether impossible to sustain, on a permanent basis.

Sikhism is fundamentally inimical to this attitude and it is in this sense that it is hostile to all the modern socialist organisations in which, for whatever ideological reasons, a class of people seeks to gain the upper-hand over the individual to such an extent as to destroy or curtail considerably his inner autonomy and his worth and status as an individual. While Sikhism is in sympathy with most of the moral ideas with which it is sought to justify the ideals of these social theories, and in fact maintains that the ideal Sikh society shall be broad-based on these ideas, It is out of sympathy with the evolution and growth of any apparatus which enables a class of men to exploit an individual, to suppress and subjugate him in the name of abolishing the exploitation of man by man.

It, therefore, follows that while Sikhism seeks to establish a social pattern, and eventually a global Society in which the socialist moral ideas of individual welfare, equality and freedom for all without reasonable discrimination, shall have acceptance, it is opposed to any development which, in practice, and in reality, seeks to devalue the individual as a mere cog in a machine or a mere honey gathering insect in a beehive. It is for this reason, that Sikhism conceives of the religious evolution of man as a necessary and integral prerequisite and condition of its march towards the ideal Society.

Socialism and Communism are not the same or even similar. For, though their slogans are similar or the same, they are separated by a moral abyss. The immoralism of communism is a basic postulate which stems out of its view of the ultimate Reality which the communists regard as the primacy of the matter over the mind. From the tautology that they do not differ entirely, no conclusion can be insinuated that they do not differ essentially. Dictatorship without popular support, without an independent legal system and without free criticism would seem to be a permanent feature and not a passing phase of the communist society. Communist society is basically a military society which accepts an unlimited military commitment that does not terminate till the end of “the class struggle,” a heritage from Marx himself. This commitment overrides all other merely “civilian” institutional safe-guards, and it rests on two fundamental beliefs, one, that

communism embodies the will of the workers and it stands not for what they seem to want now, in the present, for what they ought to want eventually as conceived by their rulers, and, two, that nothing 'fundamentally wrong could occur in the Soviet Union, or the "Socialist Bloc" because the party of the workers was in power there, guided by an incorruptible top leadership dedicated to the cause of the golden future.

This and Sikhism never shall meet.

Likewise, a democratic stage of modern conception is unacceptable to Sikhism wherein the citizens are required to relinquish their rights by conferring them upon a 'general will' of a single and indivisible sovereign people. This 'general will', in practice, is only the will of the numerical majority. The omnipotence of the majority is the practical corollary of democracy, and respect for the rights of minorities loses all effectual sanction just because the individuals have forfeited all power to insist upon their rights, by conferring them bodily upon the state. The concentration of an immense power in the hands of an often fictitious and rigged majority is truly tyrannical. There is, therefore, justification to place democracy and despotism on the same plane, in many cases.

Again, where a state-community called, 'the nation', does not consist of citizens having a well-accepted uniform political destination and a common purpose, the Anglo-Saxon, 'one head, one single nontransferable vote' is, verily, the devil's device to degrade and liquidate a permanent minority by virtually annulling all genuine representation to such as the Sikhs are hardly one percent of the non-Sikh citizenry of India. The degradation and demoralisation which it entails for the Sikhs is worse than slavery and death.

The current Sikh disquietude and unrest in India is as much due to the realities of the situation as to the basic Sikh doctrine of the worth and status of the individual which is not compatible with the implications of a centralised state and one man, one vote steam roller democracy, and Sikhism, therefore, repudiates the democratic state of this conception, as an imposition and a tyranny, as bad and unacceptable a tyranny and imposition as the Mughal rule.

All political theories and social organisations which proceed from a secular assumption or are based on ideas that generate institutions capable of destroying or curtailing the spiritual autonomy of the individual, therefore, are unacceptable to Sikhism, for, Sikhism perceives the inner contradiction which lies in all such doctrines and practices. This inner contradiction is that these doctrines and practices naively assume that human happiness and prosperity can be achieved through the transformation of the environmental conditions of man, without contemporaneously touching upon and transforming the moral and spiritual make-up of the individual. This is a basic and dangerous fallacy and the dilemma with which the mankind is faced today. The dilemma of today which faces the mankind is precisely this that, man has achieved an understanding of and mastery over nature which has out-paced its understanding of and mastery of himself.

Sikhism warns against the fallacy out of which this dilemma arises, and it uncompromisingly opposes all theories and practices which seek to build a fully happy and prosperous society on a merely secular base.

A possible misconception about the Sikh notions on the subject must be removed here. The ideal Sikh society is not a religious or a church-state, or a theocratic set-up. A religious state is based on the assumption that unity of religion is more or less necessary in order to secure national unity and strength and in order to maintain order and social harmony. The terrible life and death struggle into which the Sikhs were pushed by the Mughal emperors, informed and guided by the doctrines of the political Islam, resulted precisely from this assumption of Islamic polity. The wars of religion, and the prolonged periods of bloodshed which have disfigured the history of Europe for hundreds of years, are also seen to be the necessary concomitant of this assumption. The peace of Augsburg in AD. 1555, concluded to end wars of religion in Europe, on the principle, *cuius regis eius religio*, that is, that every subject must accept the religion of his ruler, precisely the principle which motivated and sustained emperor Aurangzeb throughout his long and eventful reign. The sub-conscious traces of this assumption, it would seem, still linger in the India of today. Similarly, a theocratic state is

based on the presumption that the rulers are answerable not for the welfare of the bodies of their subjects but for the salvation of their souls, and that, the end of all political endeavour is not in this world but in the next. Sikhism considers these assumptions as misconceived, for, it believes that there lies a fundamental and higher unity in all true religions which are apparently diverse and that, therefore, the social harmony and the national unity of a state must be founded on this fundamental unity, accepting freedom of worship. Sikhism takes up the stand that,

“the temple and the mosque and the worship of God as differently made therein are not fundamentally different”.<sup>7</sup>

Sikhism thus holds that it is the duty of an organised religion, which postulate is an article of creed in Sikhism, not only to accept and uphold liberty of conscience to all, but also to defend actively the right to such liberty of those whose conscience moves them in a seemingly different direction. For achieving agreement and unity, the Order of the Khalsa relies upon the methods of enlightenment and persuasion, in place of coercion and brain washing.

For this exposition of social implications of Sikhism it is clear that, all social theories and political organisations which result in the subjugation oppression of the spiritual autonomy of the individual are unacceptable to Sikhism, and all overdeveloped and centralised societies and states belong to this category. The over-developed societies and a centralised state are a prison in which the Sikh soul withers and against which it is in perpetual revolt. This sense of revolt, inherent in the Sikh spirit, persistently strives to flower in influential nonconformity, and influential non-conformity is rarely tolerated by the organs of social power, though mere crankiness and intellectual clowning may be so tolerated by liberal states.

The cultural and spiritual climate in human societies is decisively conditioned though not wholly generated by their political structure, and cultural and spiritual decay can be arrested, in the main, by a shift in the centres of power. From this follows the Sikh purpose and dream of ‘*raj karega Khalsa*’ which is solemnly affirmed, twice a day, in all Sikh congregational prayers, throughout the world, wherever the Sikhs as such meet.

These, broadly, are the social implications of Sikhism, in the context of the modern political world situation.

1. *je sau canda ugave suraj chadhe bajar,*  
*ete chanan hondian gur bin ghor andhar.* — Asa
2. *candramah manso jatah, caksusurya ajayatah.*
3. *je tau pia di sikk bia na, thbahi kabida,* — *Sloku, Farid*
4. *ar sikh hon apne hi man kau, ibi ialac haun gun tau uccraun,* — *Dasamgranth*
5. *mabati devata hyosha naranrupena nistrati.* — *Mahavdharamsastra.*
6. *vayadhamma samkharā,* — *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra.*
7. *dehura masit soi, puja-namaj oee.* — *Akalustat.*

## CHAPTER VI

### A PERSPECTIVE

In the year 1979 we are at a stage of world history in which not only the distance has been annihilated but other walls such as that of language, history, tradition, that separate peoples and nations from each other have also been considerably lowered. Three modern scientific ideas have shaken the complacency of the 19<sup>th</sup> century secular thought just as the 19<sup>th</sup> century scientific thought had shaken the seemingly secure church-dogmatism of religion and bigoted certitudes of certain world-religions. These three modern scientific ideas are that (1) the matter is bottled up energetical light waves; “That what is gross is the subtle” <sup>1</sup> (2) the universe is an act of thought, “the entire phenomenon has been created by God by an act of thought,” <sup>2</sup> and (3) Heisenberg’s ‘principle of indeterminacy’ in nature. Thus the ‘matter’ has been shown to be as rich, if not richer, in possibilities than the ‘spirit’; the energy it contains is incalculable, and it can undergo an infinite number of transformations.’ The ‘materialist’ in its 19<sup>th</sup> century connotation has become meaningless and so has the expression ‘rationalist’. The logic of ‘commonsense’ is no longer valid since in the new physics, a fact can be both true and false at the *same time*, unlike the Jaina *syadvad*, the May-be doctrine of Jaina logic, which demonstrated that A may be A, at one point of time, ‘t-1’ and it may be not - A, at another point of time, ‘t-2’ or, that A may be A from one perspective ‘p-1’ and A may be not-A from another perspective, ‘p-2’. Now, as we understand the point, AB no longer equals BA, since an entity can be at once continuous and discontinuous, a particle and a wave. Physics, the model for all the natural sciences, can no longer be relied upon to determine what is or, what is not possible. The concept of ‘strangeness’, the ‘quantum number’ has changed all these things and we now know that scientific hypotheses can offer us no new knowledge; <sup>3</sup> they are like the Spanish inn where you may only find what you bring yourself, and scientific speculation finally has led us to ‘symbols’, airy, unknown, insubstantial and like a wisp of the wind, incapable of affording a foothold to man’s unending restlessness for reaching substance and certitude. Man cannot content like the boa-constrictor to have good meal once a month and sleep the rest of the time. No promises of utopias on earth or visions of socialist sumptuousness, communist felicity or other political juggleries can give rest and sense of final self-fulfillment to man; only a technology or teaching capable of ensuring direct comprehension of and a direct contact with Reality may do so. Religion is a mode of actual living and the only serious way of handling Reality. This is precisely what the ‘Epilogue’, *mundavani* in the Sikh scripture says :

“In this revealed text, three topics are stated; the Reality, contact with it and how to do so.

The immortal Name of God the All-Ground, is herein the major premise.

Total self-fulfillment and the peace that knoweth no ending is the reward for those who understand, accept and act upon it.

Man cannot turn his back on it, permanently.” <sup>4</sup>

The different living religions, therefore; are now in a position to look at each other with the eye of comparison and to find as to in what points they fundamentally differ from their contemporaries, in the matter of doctrine and religious experience. This task of comparison entails re-assessment of the ancestral heritage of each religion and this process of re-assessment is by far the most hopeful sign which promises the emergence of a world religion and a world society.

Joachim Wach (1898-1955) of the Chicago School of the latest theological speculations in Europe, emphasises three aspects of religion (1) Theoretical is, religious ideas and images, (2) the practical or behavioural and (3) the institutional, that is, how its values tend to shape the institutions that express them. In the alternative religions may be grouped (1) according to their conception of the Divine, (2) according to the type of piety they foster, that is the human type they produce and



insert into society and the stream of history.

To distinguish Sikhism from the other higher and world religions, therefore, it is necessary to point out the broad points of agreement between Sikhism and the other religions, as well as the points of difference.

It is a common postulate of all higher religions of mankind that there is a spiritual Presence which mysteriously sustains the universe of phenomena and that it is this spiritual Presence which is absolutely real. Indeed, it is the silent premise of all human knowledge and awareness that all that is visible is grounded in the invisible; all that is rational has its roots in the irrational all that is felt and sensed sprouts from the mysterious, the incomprehensible. A contemplation of this 'unknown' is the beginning of 'the idea of the holy' referred to as, *bismadu*, 'a sense of awe and wonder', in the Sikh scripture<sup>5</sup> and an abiding empathy with it as the goal and fruit of religion.<sup>6</sup>

In all history of human thought, people have always divided, tacitly, the world into the 'visible' and 'invisible' and they have always understood that the visible world accessible to their direct observation and examination represents but a small fraction perhaps even something unreal, in comparison with the really existent world. In all the human systems of thought, the scientific systems, the philosophical systems and the religious systems, is recognised this division between the 'seen' and the 'unseen', no matter under what names or definitions. In the two thousand years old, the first Samskrit text of versified narration, *Valamiki's Ramayan*, two basic concepts occur, again and again, in narrating secular events *diya*, the 'luminous subtle', and *adrasta* the 'unseen invisible'.

In science the invisible world is the world of 'small quantities', and also the world of large quantities. The visibility of the world is determined by its scale. The invisible world, on the one hand is the world of micro-organisms, cells, the microcosmic and the ultra-microscopic world; still further, it is the world of molecules, atoms, electrons, vibrations, and, on the other hand, the world of invisible stars, other solar systems, unknown universes. The microscope expands the limits of our vision in one, telescope, in the other. But both enlarge visibility very little in comparison with what remains invisible. Physics and Chemistry show us the possibility of investigating the phenomenon in such small quantities or in as distant worlds, as will never be visible to us.

In philosophy there is the world of events and the world of causes, the world of phenomenon and the world of numenon, the world of things and the world of ideas.

In all religions, most developed and the most primitive, there is a division of the world into the visible and invisible: in Christianity, gods, angels, devils, demons, souls, of the living and the dead, heaven or hell; in paganism, gods personifying forces of nature, thunder, sun, fire, spirits of mountains, lakes, water-spirits, house-spirits, all this is the invisible world. The same is the case with Islam, Hinduism and Mahayana.

Mathematics goes even further. It conceives of and calculates such relations between magnitudes and such relations between these relations as have nothing similar in the visible world. Thus, we are forced to admit that the invisible world differs from the visible world not only in size but in some other properties which we can neither define nor understand, and further that, the laws discovered by us for the visible world cannot refer or apply to the invisible world.

In this manner, the invisible worlds, the scientific, the philosophical and the religious worlds, are, after all, more closely related to each other than they would, at first sight, appear to be and these invisible worlds of different categories possess identical, common properties, (1) incomprehensibility and (2) being the matrix of the ground and causes of the phenomenon of the visible world. "No phenomenon can 'become independently of the invisible Being, and the entire visible world is strung on the single thread of this Being'.<sup>7</sup>

The idea of 'Causes' is always bound up, associated with, the invisible world. In the world of religious systems, invisible forces govern people and the visible phenomenon. "All that becomes and all that passes away, all that is visible and all that is invisible, the whole of creation and the entire cosmos, all that is and exists, (here and there) is supported and governed by a single absolute Power."<sup>8</sup>

“It is this invisible Power, that is causer of all causes”.<sup>9</sup>

Man has always understood that the ‘causes’ of the visible and observable phenomenon lie beyond the sphere of his observation and they inhere in “the Power unseen that is the matrix of all the invisible regions.”<sup>10</sup>

In this postulate Sikhism agrees with the higher living religions of the world such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

Another postulate of these higher religions is that man finds himself not only in need of arriving at an awareness of this absolute Reality, but also to be in communion with it, in touch with it. There is a basic urge in man which demands that unless this is done he cannot feel himself at home in the world in which he finds himself born and living. “Outside nearness to gracious God, where else there is rest and peace for man”?<sup>11</sup>

This is an implicit postulate of all the aforementioned higher and living religions and Sikhism is in agreement with them in accepting this postulate.

With regard to the nature of this spiritual Presence which lies behind and sustains the world of phenomena, it is agreed by all these higher living religions that it is not contained in and is greater than either some of the phenomena or the sum total of the phenomena, including the man himself. The *Rigveda* says that only “one fourth of Him is the entire Creation, while the remaining three fourths of Him is in the luminous invisible regions of immortality.”<sup>12</sup> Sikhism agrees with this. “Greater than the sum-total of the entire cosmic phenomenon, the created world is He.”<sup>13</sup>

All these great religions agree with each other in asserting that the nature of this absolute Reality, which lies behind and sustains the phenomena, has an aspect which is neutral and which is impersonal. The *nirvana* of Buddhism and *parabrahma* of Hinduism, and the experience of the mystics of Islam and Christianity affirm this aspect and characteristics of absolute Reality. But they agree also that this absolute Reality has a personal aspect too. The Mahayana Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam are all agreed that the absolute Reality has a face which is personal, in the sense in which a human being is a person, and that human beings encounter this personal face of the absolute Reality in the same sense in which one individual human being encounters another. What is a ‘person’? A ‘person’ must be distinguished from a ‘thing’ and ‘existence’ must be distinguished from ‘being’. ‘Existence’ is that which manifests as ‘being’ in the consciousness of a ‘person’, while ‘things’ and ‘persons’ both partake of the ‘being’. ‘Person’ as a substance is characterised by four attributes: (1) its ability to think, feel, will etc., (2) its unity as a present state of mind, (3) its historical unity, and (4) its being aware of these two types of unity. The personal God of higher religions is believed as having all these four attributes.

What precisely this personal aspect is, whether it periodically manifests itself only once-for-all and in a unique incarnation, is not universally agreed. But all these great living religions agree that the spiritual presence which permeates and sustains the world of phenomena has a personal aspect. Mahayana declares that this personal aspect of absolute Reality manifests itself in the *bodhisattavas* and is plural. For Hinduism and for Christianity this personal aspect is triune, i.e. it assumes the form of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, or the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. In Islam this personal aspect is deemed as Singular in the form of one God, without a rival or co-partner, *wahid-bu-, la-sharik*. While in Hinduism and Christianity this personal aspect communicates to man by assuming a human form, in Judaism it directly speaks to man from behind an impenetrable veil of a ‘burning bush’ and in Islam it does so indirectly through a supra human messenger, Gabriel. In Sikhism, this communication is direct<sup>14</sup>, as Sikhism repudiates the idea of divine incarnation.<sup>15</sup>

Further, Sikhism, while accepting that the personal aspect of the absolute Reality is singular; declares this Person to be the Universal mind of which all other finite minds are but emanations. “He is the light that incandesces all that shines”.<sup>16</sup> These finite minds are at each moment one with the universal Mind, for, “He resides in every finite mind and every finite mind is contained within Him”,<sup>17</sup> and the essence of their finitude being eliminative and not productive. “Only such awareness a finite mind has, as God enlightens him”<sup>18</sup> That what makes a mind finite and

distinguished from the universal Mind is what has been eliminated out of it and not what has been produced by it. It is this universal Mind which Sikhism holds as the absolute Reality and it is from this doctrine that the basic teaching of Sikhism declaring ego-centricity, the self-centredness of infinite, individuated human mind, as the basic malaise and alienation of the existential man<sup>19</sup>, an annulment of which is the main objective of religion. (1) To accept consciousness into altogether a centric consciousness, characterised by utter dispassionate objectivity and (3) to achieve abiding communion with absolute Reality, the God, through the discipline of Nam-yoga". This is all Sikhism.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, although Sikhism is largely in agreement with the basic postulates of the great living religions of the world, it has its points of distinction which are not less important and which when translated into action i.e. into the counsel which it gives to mankind to attain its highest destiny, lead to practical consequences which not only mark Sikhism from the other great religions but also make it for peculiar interest to the modern man.

The 'modern man', we, in this book, have equated with 'the layman' to distinguish a properly educated well-read man of to-day from a 'specialist', who, is trapped in his own self-imposed limitations such as make him judge all human problems within the frame-work of his own special domain.

Scientists lay claim to the entire field of knowledge about the universe, including the human problems and yet they themselves limit their claim by defining the universe in terms of the observable phenomenon, observable by the human organs of sense and with their tool-extensions, and including such things as sub-atomic particles whose presence can be inferred only from their observable effects. This field of observation, that is of sensory perception, is an abstract from the totality of human experience and both are not the same. This stupidity of the scientist has confused and befuddled the human intellect for the past two hundreds years giving birth to anti-religion ideological monsters and demons luring man into the Bermuda Triangle of socialism, communism and secularism, that social transformations aimed at setting up utopias on this earth through political upheavals and revolutions is the only and final solution of the basic human problems.

The human problems are a state of the psyche while the problems of material well-being and affluence are only relatable to the problems of nerves, and that by tackling and solving the latter, one does not necessarily solve the former, is being slowly and dimly realised by the lay-man today, thus focusing his attention on religion as a matter of top-priority for the serious minded person. He who does not understand the situation thus, about him Dr. A.N. Whitehead remarks:

"There is no hope for a person who cannot distinguish between a state of nerves and the state of the psyche".

The layman of today, the modern man, is under the assaultive impact of two urgencies. One, he must re-arrange his entire sum-total of 'scientific thought' so as to provide his judgemental capacities with a new and all-comprehensive frame work, and two, he must discover and adopt a religious way of life to come to terms with the absolute Reality.

The older world religions tend to persuade and tempt man to the ideal of 'static perfection', an idea associated with the ancient Greek thinker, Parmenides, and subsequently embodied in Plato's theory of Ideas. These religions, therefore, great and profound as they are, appear to be somewhat inapplicable to the human affairs as viewed by our 'lay man'. Man needs for his fulfillment not only the achievement of this or that 'highest good', the summum bonum, but hope and enterprise and change, an ever-alluring yet constantly receding numinous Vision. As Hobbes says : 'felicity consisteth in prospering, not in having prospered'. Among modern philosophers, therefore, the idea of an unending, static, unchanging bliss is replaced by an orderly and evolutionary progress towards a goal which is never quite attained. This altered outlook comes from substitution of dynamics for statics that began with Galileo and has increasingly affected all modern thinking, scientific or political, secular or religious.

Such an ever-beckoning, constantly receding numinous Ideal is promised, par excellence, by

Sikhism, its teachings and technology, its dogmatics and its basic Vision : “My Lord is ever new, new every specious moment, and for ever and for ever more, the All-Bestower”. <sup>21</sup>

1. *Nanak so sukhani soi asthul. — Sukhmani*

2. *hari simrani kio sagal akara. — Sukhmani*

3. *baba horu mati horu hore,*

*je sau ver kamaie,*

*kude kuda joru — Guru Granth Sahib*

4. *thal vic tin vastu paio sat santokh vicaro, amrit nam thakur ka paio jiska sabhs adharo,*

*je ko khavaie je koo bhuncai tiska hoe udharo; iha vastu taji na jai nit nil rakh urdharo — Guru Granth Sahib.*

5. *adi ka bicaru bismad kathiale.*

6. *dekh adrist rabau bismadi dukhu binsai sukh ai jio.*

7. *tum te bhinn nahi.kicchu hoe, apan suti sabhu jagatu proe. — Sukhmani*

8. *avanu javan dristi andristi, agiakari dhari sabh sristi.— Sukhmani*

9. *ki koran kunind hain. — Japu, Dasamgranth.*

10. *ki ghaibul ghaib hain. — ibid.*

11. *hari nabna miliai sajanai kol pale bisram. — Baramaha*

12. *Padah asya vishva bhutani triyapada asya amrtam divi. (X 90. 3)*

13. *vaduh vada vada medni. —Asa, paudi.*

14. *bhagat-sang prabhu gost karat — Guru Granth*

15. *so mukhu jalau jitu kabai thakur joni — ibid*

16. *Tisdai canani sabh mahi cananu hoe. — Dhanasri*

17. *man mahi api man apune mahi. — Sukhmani*

18. *jaisi mati dei taisa pargasu. — ibid.*

19. *haumai diragh rog hai. — Sikh Scripture*

20. *bhana manna, hanta tiagan, satanamu simiran liv lagan.— As explained to Bhai mani Singh, the martyr by the last Sikh Prophet, Guru Gobind Singh.*

21. *sahib mera nit navan sada sada datar. — Dhansari*

## CHAPTER VII

### SIKHISM AND THE WORLD SOCIETY

I may say that there are, broadly speaking five categories of religions from the point of view of societal outlook and institutional action, that is, their scope of prevailment.

(1) Religions that are ethnic, grounded in the conviction that entitlement to and direct benefits of the, or their religion are divinely and irrevocably reserved for a particular ethnic tribe constituting the God-ordained elites of Religion, “the Chosen People”, in special covenant with God. Judaism is the well-known instance of this category of religions.

(2) Those who claim that entitlement to and direct benefits of their religion are freely open to the Jew and the Gentile, that is, all the peoples of the world if and only if they accept the religion in question and its verbal formulations as the exclusive repository of Truth. The oecumenical religions of Christianity and Islam belong to this category.

(3) Religion that insists that since penultimate and highest religious experience is essentially obtainable as the end-result of a long series of births and rebirths of a soul within the context of a particular geographic and cultural milieu through the process of metempsychosis, the path and benefits of the true religion are accessible exclusively to a genetic, racial group confined to a specified geographic habitat. By understanding thus alone can the Hindu claim that “it is an exclusive privilege and grace of God that enables man to be born a Hindu in the sacred land called, Bharat, that is, India; a birth in other lands, no matter of how excellent a condition and however frequently, in no better than a repetitious frustration and wearisome waste.”<sup>1</sup> The basic postulate of this doctrine is that the multitudinous personal experiences of the present as well as the characteristics of the body holding the experiencing self are the expression of the past acts in some residual and seminal form by a transmigrating entity or principle. A Hindu would explain that the fundamental convictions of the votaries of religions (1) and (2) arise out of prolonged and laborious studies of obscure phenomenon and mysterious human faculties, that can be understood properly only if the aforementioned basic postulate of Hinduism is conceded and accepted which provides the rationale of Hindu claim regarding birth in a genetic Hindu family in India.

(4) Religions that postulate that the fact of religious experience being non-intellectual and non cognitive implicates that operative level of the religion must be the *upaya*, the provisional means, and; not doctrines and concepts, beliefs and dogmas and these *upaya* have to be as variable as the beings whose spiritual foods they are meant to supply. Buddhism, as the export-form of Hinduism, is a religion of this category with its numerous expressions ranging from Hinayana, the original ethico-philosophical religion, to Mahayana, Vajrayana, Tantrayana, Mantrayana, Tibetan Buddhism and the Zen, to mention only the major manifestations of Buddhism.

(5) The Religion that aims at transcending all particularism in religion and points towards a religious experience realized as the All-Ground of all particular religious experiences and which, therefore, does not confront dogma with dogma and belief with belief and which does not aim at religious conversion so much as authentic religious life and is thus primarily a bridge-maker and not a universal conqueror or all-leveller, such as oecumenical religions, like Islam and Christianity tend to be. Sikhism, being a religion of this category does not outrightly reject or oppose other doctrines or dogmas but demands true dialogue rather than conversion as the goal transcending particularisms of other religions, as it preaches that beyond lies, not a universal concept, not synthesis or syncretic amalgam, but deeper penetration of one’s own religion in thought, devotion and action. It upholds that in the depth of every religion, a living religion, there is a point at which religion itself loses its importance, and that to which it points breaks through its particularity, elevating it to spiritual freedom and with it to a vision of the spiritual presence in other expressions of the ultimate meanings of existence. In the Sikh scripture, the epiphany of Sikhism is alluded to as “the bursting of the

seamless egg shell of superstition, enlightening the human mind” and “cutting asunder the chains that bind the feet and hinder movement” and “full freedom for spiritual evolution of man is thus assured,”<sup>2</sup>

2. The religions of the category (1) are of elitic exclusivity, engrossed in and pre-occupied with the maintenance and preservation of their own identity and their status, of a spiritual privilegia through political and social viability.

3. The religions of category (2), in the case of Christianity, believing that, the nature of things is divine love for the created world, aim at a will to create through suffering and movement of such wills that is expected to lead to establishment of a new kingdom and state of affairs in human history in which God's Will is “done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

4. The other variety of category (2) of which Islam is an expression, par-excellence, aims at and, strives for, *al-jihad*, a universal or dominant monolithic, close Muslim world-society in which the laws of personal conduct and social organisation revealed unambiguously and finally by God through Prophet Mohammed are obeyed and enforced — this being the ultimate purpose of God in creating the world and man-and which Muslim society is to be enlarged and strengthened progressively through the policy of enforcement of Islamic laws through sword,” *ahshara' tabatus-saif*.

5. The category (3) religions are insular, self-sufficient and self-engrossed, concerned only with ensuring external non-interference and the internal purity.

6. The religions of category (4) are a — social, catholic and concerned exclusively with awakening in the individual-in his personal capacity and not in his position as a limb of the society-transcendental consciousness, *prajna*, the wisdom that liberates from the limitations of all names and forms.

7. The religions of the category (5), that is Sikhism, freely recognizes that search for a fundamental unity of religions or the attempts at the religious rapprochement have their limitations, for, there are fundamental differences in the conceptions of reality and attitudes towards the world, permanently impeding a real and lasting synthesis between basically incompatible elements, preaches frank and unreserved dialogue between various religions and the human groups that owe allegiance to these religions, so as to arrive at the experience that transcends religious particularism and realizes a base of identity underneath all modes of religious expression. “Through whatever the road a man takes or the mode of worship he adopts to achieve nearness to God, Verily God receives and accepts him,” says the Sikh Scripture.<sup>3</sup> As a corollary thereof, Sikhism favours a plural, free, open and progressive human society, God-oriented, non-aggressive but firm and ever-ready to confront and combat rise and growth of evil through organized resistance, and forward-looking yet non-ambitious. For facilitating emergence of this state of affairs it has conceived of and recommends organized and co-operative efforts of men of good will, indicating the true sources of dynamism available to man for this purpose, the details of which, however, are outside the scope of this short Note.

## CHAPTER VIII

### AHIMSA -ITS POLITICAL GRAMMAR\*

Ahimsa is originally a term of Yoga, where it is stipulated as one of the necessary mental disciplines for achieving the yogic goal, which is to step up gradually and step by step, beyond all the behaviour and values peculiar to the human condition. The Yoga aims at elimination of all dispersions and automatisms of the secular mind and thus “to die to this life” so as to take a new and qualitatively different rebirth into another way of being. Ahimsa is an integral part of the initiatory structure of Yoga and *ex-hypothesi*, it is alien to normal social or political behaviour of man, and from the true and original content of *ahimsa* therefore, a grammar of social or political technology cannot be, theoretically, extracted.

But *ahimsa* has also been declared as the essence of Buddhist technique for achieving the gnosis : *Jivahimsa parmodharma*, that is, an a value-measure of human conduct on the secular plane. The non-monastic Jaina community also regards “ahimsa” as the quintessence of social behaviour of man thus recognising it a normative rule of Ethics. Without digressing into the practical manifestations and consequences of regulating secular human behaviour, strictly based on *ahimsa*, it is legitimate to affirm that the Buddhist and the Jaina *ahimsa* is something different and something less than the original and true *ahimsa* of the Yoga to which plane it truly belongs. As an ethical norm of social secular behavior *ahimsa* is for all practical purposes, avoidance of injury to “living form of life”, as the Buddhist dictum, *jivohimsa parmodharma*, lays down, *Jivohimsa*, “non-injury to living life, and it constitutes an end in itself instead of a mere technique as originally conceived by Yoga. This *ahimsa*, on the plane of the secular social behaviour, is not a tool for the basic restructuring of human mind but is a functional norm and measure, valid as an end and not merely legitimate and imperative as a means. The original yogic “*ahimsa*” has its focus exclusively on the re-structuration of the human mind itself, while the Buddhist and Jaina *ahimsa*, as a regulatory norm of social behaviour, primarily focuses an avoidance of injury to other forms of life.

It is necessary to appreciate this distinction between the yogic *ahimsa* and the socio-political *ahimsa* before we may properly consider the merits or otherwise of the grammar of *ahimsa*, as a tool of social persuasion or political confrontation.

Mahatma Gandhi, who extracted the doctrine of *satyagraha*, literally, “holding fast to truth”, out of the concept of *ahimsa*, was a Jaina by birth and his main vocation in life was political activity. The technique of *satyagraha* that he evolved and tried to practice during the British Colonial rule in India was, in fact, a confection of many ingredients. Its base was undoubtedly the social *ahimsa* of the Jaina variety, but it was mixed up with the Christian “Sermon on the Mount” that holds forth the good news that “the weak shall inherit the earth”, and the amorphous notions of Tolstoy whose basic concern was a search for individual happiness and who came to the conclusion that the truth that brings happiness cannot be preached and can only be achieved by individuals who honestly look within themselves. Tolstoy tried to bring his daily existence into conformity with his views by living an ascetic life of self-denial and as much self-sufficiency as possible, which resulted in complete and somewhat hostile estrangement between himself and his wife and elder sons. He modified the Ten Commandments of Christianity, in accordance with what he believed to be Christ’s real utterances, by formulating five Commandments to guide him: do not be angry; do not lust : do not bind yourself by oaths; resist not him that is evil; be good to the just and the unjust. Instead of these insights providing Tolstoy with an efficient technique and a successful weapon for political confrontation, his worsening domestic situation forced him to leave home stealthily one night in search of a refuge and a few days later, in 1910, he died of pneumonia, exposed to merciless winter, at a remote Russian railway station.

Whether a tree is to be known by its roots or by its fruits, the ingredients out of which

Mahatma Gandhi confectioned his *satyagraha*, also interchangeably called, *ahimsa*, apparently hold out little promise of being a viable tool of politics. But although, whether Mahatma Gandhi was capable of such keen logical clarity of mind to have seen this point, his pragmatic subtlety cannot be doubted. Lord Wavell, the last British Viceroy of India, in his private diary, now published as *The Viceroy's Journal*, a few years ago, pays the Mahatma, a left-handed compliment by saying that, "Gandhi is a very tough politician and not a saint." Mahatma Gandhi showed much perceptiveness in judging the true character of his adversary, namely, the Oxbridgian British rulers of India. He perfectly understood their notions of what constituted "civilised" behaviour and "gentlemanly" conduct, and through his applied *satyagraha* Mahatma Gandhi succeeded thoroughly in exasperating and weakening the Will to rule of these foreigners. This purely extraneous element in the situation invested Mahatma Gandhi's *satyagraha-cum-ahimsa* technology with a semblance of plausibility and viability. There is intrinsically, or demonstrably, no potency in *ahimsa* or *satyagraha* itself to recommend it as a suitable weapon of war or peace.

Non-violent *satyagraha* is, at its roots, coercive and not persuasive, capable of conquest or designed to conquer through love or sweet reason. When its roots are bared and exposed, it is seen not as an act of spiritual transformation or genuine reformation, but a judo-technique of hitting below the belt and a skill of moral blackmail. *Satyagraha*, "holding fast to truth", is a gloved first, a loaded weapon, for the question which Pontius Pilate posed to Jesus Christ, two thousand years ago, still remains unanswered, "What is truth?" In place of plain and frank jingoism: "My country, right or wrong," in *satyagraha*, you assert: "I am in possession of the exclusive truth."

Besides, non violence is not *germane* to the basic structure of human psyche, such as would ensure a natural catalytic process leading to voluntary redressal of injustice or atonement of wrongs. As Plato has stated in his, *Proof of Immortality*, wickedness often pays and an average man has no compulsive reason to give it up, *ahimsa* and *satyagraha*, notwithstanding:

"Far from being deadly to the wicked man himself, wickedness makes him very much alive and fills him with an unsleeping energy."

It is no wise arguable or demonstrable that injustice can be righted and a right can be won by employing non-violent *satyagraha*. The latest scientific discipline, Ethnology, has established aggressiveness as the natural quality of human psyche, and non-violence as simply "rubbish". Freud, the father of Psycho-analysis, in his *Civilisation and its Discontents*, observes that:

"The truth is that men are not friendly, gentle creatures, wishing for love .... but that a powerful measure for aggression has to be reckoned with as their instinctual endowment."

Logically considered, non-violence must postulate there being a basic identity of interests between the protesting party and the party protested to. This is, by no means, always the case and, in fact, is contrary to common sense as well as historical experience of mankind. There are, literally, innumerable cases, recorded and authenticated, where Jews men and women, in Hitler's concentration camps came forth voluntarily to hang themselves, in some dim hope of melting the hearts of their Nazi persecutors, but in each case, invariably, the offer of suicide was promptly and approvingly accepted. Rudyard Kipling has rightly observed that a sparrow clutched in the predatory talons of a hawk gets no relief by pitiable agonized cries but merely invites further punishment by annoying its captor.

Non-violence has been upheld as a superior way of life on account of its survival-bestowing value. This argument is derived from the affirmation in the "Sermon on the Mount" and the allied Christian temper that speaks of "the meek inheriting the earth", in the long run, and those who employ the sword, doomed to perish by the sword. This argument is, by no means conclusive and besides, is highly specious. Firstly, it is, by no means; certain that the meek and the non-violent always, or even mostly survive. Dodo was, by all accounts, as non-violent and saintly as a crooning pigeon, and on account of its flightless bulk and blunt broad beak was a natural model of non-violence, but it has become extinct and has not survived. Nature respects capacity for self-defence in the relentless struggle for existence, survival, and seems to regard non-violent *satyagraha* as an irrel-



evant and spurious quality for this purpose. A reference here also might be permissible to the six million, non-violent, non-resisting Jews who perished recently in the death-dealing concentration camps of Hitler. Secondly, this, “the meek inheriting the earth”, argument altogether bypasses the question of human dignity and the qualitative aspect of sheer survival. The Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, a weighty and modern source-book on questions of spiritual quality and moral status of human existence, refers to “the stone” and “the reptilian crawling life” as the lowest levels on the vertical ladder of ethical and spiritual value-systems. It refers to men, wholly engrossed in secular existence, alienated from the life of the spirit, as “a meaningless rock”,<sup>1</sup> “a long-lived creeping reptile.”<sup>2</sup> Is physical survival always preferable to the certain death resulting from a heroic violent confrontation with evil things? Best moral judgements and most praiseworthy conduct of individuals in history and the noblest feelings of man in certain critical situations, certainly do not endorse ignoble survival and flight from choice of a noble death. The great Sanskrit epic, *Mahabharat*, an authority on the Hindu value-system, declares that :

“Non-violence<sup>3</sup> is the basic truth of religion but proper violence is also equally true. I tell you solemnly that this is the true Principle that Wardens of Justice follow.”<sup>4</sup>

The Sikh Prophet Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1707), the Law-giver of the Modern Age, lays down that:

“When all peaceful means fail, to take up the sword in hand, is a lawful imperative.”

And about seeking survival through submission and anyhow, he says :

“I would confront and oppose that what is evil, to destroy it or to subdue it, or die fighting against it, with dignity.”<sup>5</sup>

To sum up : (1) the original yogic concept of “ahimsa” is not the same as the Christian doctrine of non-confrontative submission through love, (2) the non-violence of Tolstoy is not the same as the *satyagraha* of Mahatma Gandhi, (3) As a norm of social behavior “non-violence” is not viable or productive under all circumstances, and (4) as a grammar of survival-value, non-violent *satyagraha* is neither practicable in ultimate terms, nor is it in conformity with human dignity and manly honour, always.

\* Being the text of an address delivered to the students of Santa Clara University (U.S.A.) on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 1979 by the author. Professor Dr. Sweetezer was in the Chair.

1. *Patthtar sail*

2. *sarap jon arjari*

3. *ahimsa saklo dharmah hinsah dharmas tatha hitalch, satyamteaham paravakyamiyo dharma satyavadinan santikarvam, Santiparvam.*

4. *chun dast aẖ hameh bilte dargusast, halal ast burdan b-shamshir dast.*

5. *jab avi ki avadhi nidan banai ran main ati hi tab jujh maron.*

## CHAPTER IX

### WAR AND SIKHISM

It is generally asserted that the first five Sikhs Gurus, to Guru Arjan (1563-1606), were opposed to individual participation in war, and to war as a measure of national policy, and that it was the persecution of Guru Arjan by the Mughal Emperor Jehangir which obliged the Sikh movement to diverge from its true doctrine of pacifism.

Arnold Toynbee<sup>1</sup> says that Sikhism fell from its religious height into a political trough, because the Sikh Gurus, Hargobind and Gobind Singh ..... succumbed to the temptation to use force. And adds, that this 'downfall' of Sikhism was used by a clever militant Hindu reaction against the Mughal Empire, as its instrument.<sup>2</sup>

Both these impressions are as mistaken as they are generally current. To appreciate this mistake it is necessary to understand the real Sikh doctrine on the use of force in human life, the doctrine of pacifism of Mahatma Gandhi and its apparent roots, the Hindu doctrine of *ahimsa*, and the present-day political trend that war should be renounced by the nations of the world, as well as the true Hindu doctrine on non-violence.

These four trends of thoughts are broadly based on basically different notions and they must not be confused with each other if the Sikh position is to be properly appreciated.

The Gandhian argument against war is that it is an embodiment of violence, *himsa*, and *himsa* being per se evil and morally wrong the war is permissible under no circumstances whatever on moral and religious grounds. According to this doctrine, if the choice is between annihilation and war, or war and the perpetuation of another moral wrong, it is the alternative other than the war which must be preferred, war being the greatest evil of all.

In the *Bhagved Gita*, the cream of Hindu thought, war appears not as a means but as an end in itself, the pride, duty and glory of the *Ksatriya* caste. In fact, any gain sought through war is thought to vitiate its merit; the soldier is not to concern himself with the result of the battle. This became the Rajput ideal in the centuries to come, against which the utilitarian Aurangzeb fretted and declared that 'the Hindus are worse then worthless as soldiers, because with obstinacy of the mules they refuse to acquiesce in a strategical retreat.' It was this view of the matter, the Hindu doctrine of the final and once-for all pitched battle, which cost the Hindus their disastrous defeats, one after the other from the eleventh century to the fifteenth century, in the battle fields of Lamghan in Central Asia, and in the plains of the northern India. It was only in the eighteenth century, when the *sudra* but the shrewd, Marathas abandoned this high and mighty *ksatriya* ideal, that the Hindu honour was retrieved in the battle-fields.

In the earthy *Arthasastra*, war is mentioned as the last resort of a state, after the other means of diplomacy, perfidy, and threats, (*Sam, Dam, Bhedda*) have failed. War here is essentially a means to an end, the prestige, power, stability of the state. The whole basis of this approach to the problem is essentially moral, that is, all moral considerations are deemed as simply irrelevant.

These two doctrines, the Gandhian and the truly Hindu, on war must be contra-distinguished from the present day world trend of pacifist thought. The present day argument against war is that continued tension and series of crises will sooner or later produce war, that all wars are now likely to turn into nuclear wars being mutually destructive, to the point of annihilation, cannot be safely considered as instruments of national policy. An implicit postulate of this argument is that surrender is preferable to annihilation, despite any moral issues that may underlie the threatened conflict.

The Sikh doctrine of war is different from all these three approaches towards the problem. Firstly, Sikhism declares that war is a perfectly legitimate and permissible activity, both, as a measure of national policy and as an individual activity expressing itself in the use of force and employment of violence. Force and violence are not *per se* evil. Guru Gobind Singh in his second epistle, the

*Zafamamah*, made it plain that:-

*chun dast az hameh hille darguzast*

*halal ast burdan b-shmshir dast*

Secondly, war and use of force are to be deemed as means and not ends in themselves. This dictum of Guru Gobind Singh, that ‘the hand may legitimately move to the hilt of the sword, only when all other peaceful means have failed,’ clearly implicated this second point of distinction of the Sikh doctrine.

Thirdly, Sikhism discountenances the ideas that war and violence are to be avoided at all costs and that even annihilation and surrender are preferable irrespective of the moral issues involved. Guru Nanak himself has declared that ‘it is the privilege and right of the true man to fight for, and die in the cause of righteousness’ :

*mania munsa suriyan hake hai,*

*hoe mare narvano — Dhanasari I*

The Sikh position and the Sikh doctrine, therefore, must not be confused, either with the Gandhian thought, or the ksatriya ideal, or the Christian pacifism, or the present day no-war mental trend.

The Sikh way of life is distinct, independent, and self sufficient religion in its own right.

## CHAPTER X

### THE AXIAL RITUAL

This is an account of the ritual and the certain rites and ceremonies by which a Sikh is knighted as a *Singh* enrolled as a member of the Order of the Khalsa.

The following Rules and Regulations have received the formal approval of the premier statutory Body of the Sikhs, for managing the historic shrines in the Punjab, and. they also have the general approval of the theologians, head-priests of Sikh Seats of Authority, called 'the Thrones, *takbats*, and Sikh congregations in various parts of India, and other parts of the world, such as Malaya, Canada, Burma, U.S.A, and Africa.<sup>1</sup> The *Amrit* is administered to a Sikh, when he is knighted a *Singh*, enrolled as a member of the Order of the Khalsa, in accordance with the procedure laid down in these rules, which, substantially represent the procedure formulated and adopted by Guru Gobind Singh, on March 30, 1699, when he enrolled the first Five Beloved Ones, as the Khalsa.

1. For administering *Amrit*, a specially enclosed, separate place should be reserved for the occasion which is not a public thoroughfare, or otherwise public.

2. The *Guru Granth* should be formally throned and opened there with due ceremony and wrapped in ceremonious robes. There should present, at least six Singhs as officiants, and they must be certified and adjudged as having been not guilty of any un-expiated breach of Sikh discipline and formularies. One of these should sit on the throne in attendance of the *Guru Granth*, and the other five should co-operate in preparation and, administration of the *Amrit*. They all should have had a full bath including the washing of head-hairs, and should be dressed in clean and proper clothes. These *Singhs* may be of any sex, male or female.

3. None of the five; who have to prepare and administer the *Amrit*, should be physically defective, such as, one-eyed, lame, blind, paralytic, or suffering from any unseemly, serious or chronic disease. They should all be of good physique, good health and good bearing.

4. Every sane human being, of adult mind, irrespective of caste, creed, country, climate, race or sex, is entitled to be administered the *Amrit*, whenever he solemnly makes such a voluntary request to be enrolled into the order of the Khalsa.

5. Such a petitioner should have had a full bath, including that of the head-hairs, should be neatly and properly dressed, in possession of the five symbols of the Khalsa, uncut hair, comb duly tucked up in the tress-knot of the head hairs, the iron bangle on the right wrist, a sword in the belt, and short breeches up to the knees. He should wear a turban on head. He should stand in front of the *Guru Granth*, with due respect.

6. One of these five officiants then should put the following questions publicly to the petitioner : "Sikhism enjoins love and worship of the one Creator in contradistinction to the creatures. The worship must be implemented through selfless service of humanity and compassion towards all living creatures. Such selfless service and compassion must be inspired by continuous and progressive understanding of the 'Guru's Word' as recorded in the *Guru Granth*, broad-based on the discipline of the Name. Holy congregation is the context of this great and marvelous discipline, and the Khalsa is the Society pledged to propagate and perpetuate this holy way of Life; through which the Universe shall be blessed in the beginning, shall be blessed in the middle, and shall be blessed in the end, without end and forever. Do you, after due consideration and voluntarily, accept this Way of Life ?

7. When the petitioner has answered, "I do" then one of the five officiants should perform the congregational prayer, the *ardas* and the "orders", the *bukam* of the *Guru Granth* should be obtained. Then, one of the five officiants should stand up and addressing the holy congregation in its capacity as the Acting Guru, *Guru Panth*, should ask : "Have we the permission of the Guru to prepare and administer *Amrit* to the petitioner?" On receiving the assent of the holy congregation,

that is, such members of the Order of the Khalsa, as are present, which assent is usually given by some or all members of the holy congregation, saying in unison, "The Guru giveth the permission," all the five officiants, the five Beloved Ones, who now are transubstantiated into the original Five Beloved Ones to whom Guru Gobind Singh first administered *Amrit* on March 30, 1699, and who are now under the miraculous captaincy of Guru Gobind Singh himself, should sit in a circle on the already appointed place, where a round bowl of pure steel, full of pure water, is placed in the centre. In this bowl of water should rest, handle upward, a double edged sword of pure steel, and sugar plums or pure sugar should be added to the contents of the bowl. All the five officiants, should then assume the hero-posture, *birasan*<sup>2</sup> which consists of placing the right knee on the ground with its heel forming the stool and seat for the body, while the left knee points heavenwards, and the left toe is firmly planted on the ground. Then all the five officiants should visualise in their minds the archetypal Form of Guru Gobind Singh, tall, erect; dark blue clad, wearing an aigrette of pure dazzling gems on His turban facade, with a white hawk on His left hand and a pure steel lance in His right, fully armed, and with a dark blue steed as His vehicle. They should thus concentrate their minds within 'as the tortoise withdraws his limbs underneath his shell'. Thus, firmly postured and self-controlled, one of the officiants should firmly hold the handle of the double-edged sword in his right hand grip and place the tips of the four fingers of his left hand on the edges of the steel bowl, while the remaining four officiants should likewise place the finger tips of both the hands on the edges of the steel bowl. All the five officiants should fix the gaze of their eyes into the water of the bowl, and the first officiant should then recite the *Japu* of Guru Nanak, all the while stirring the contents of the bowl with the sword. In a similar manner, the *Japa* of Guru Gobind Singh should then be recited by the second officiant. And then the *Sudha Swayiyas* and then the *Bainti Chaupai*, of Guru Gobind Singh, and then the Anand (five first and the last stanza) of Guru Amar Dass, should be recited in a similar manner, in a firm well modulated and clear voice, by the third, fourth and the fifth officiants respectively.<sup>3</sup> The reciter should mean while keep on stirring the contents of the steel bowl with the double-edged sword.

8. After these recitations are thus over, the bowl should be covered with a clean white cloth, and one of the officiants should lift the bowl in both of his hands, and he should then again leading the 'congregational prayer' every body present standing and facing the throne, in which the ratification of Timeless God the *Akalpurkh* should be beseeched, of the *Amrit* thus prepared.

9. Then the *Amrit* should be administered to the petitioner or the petitioners in the following manner. The petitioners should sit in the hero-posture in a straight line, keeping the throne of the Guru Granth to their right. Then one of the five officiants should carry the bowl of *Amrit* in both hands, and another officiant should dip his right hand into the bowl and pour about an ounce of *Amit* into the cupped right hand of the petitioner, which the petitioner should hold up with the outstretched left hand as its base. The petitioner should then raise his cupped right hand to his lips and sip the *Amrit*, while the officiant who poured the *Amrit* into his cupped palm, should bid : "Say, The Khalsa is of the wonderous God, and Victory to God". *Bol, Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki fatahe*. The petitioner should then repeat: "The Khalsa is of the wonderous God, Victory to God". This process should be repeated five times in the case of each petitioner. Then each petitioner should be required to fix his gaze, with open unwinking eyes, into the open unwinking eyes, of the *Amrit* administering officiant, while the officiant, should throw a few drops of *Amrit* into the staring eyes of the Petitioner, with some force, to cause the shut-reflex, and this should be repeated five times, accompanied by the bidding and repetition of the formula : "The Khalsa is of the wonderous God, Victory to God," as aforesaid. Then, five times five drops of *Amrit*, should be sprinkled into the tress-knot of the hairs of the head of each petitioner, again accompanied by the bidding and repetition of the above mentioned formula thus transubstantiating the hair of the petitioner into sacred *keshas*.

If then some *Amrit* is left over, it should be sipped by all the petitioners, one after the other, from the same bowl till it is drained off. All this while, when two officiants are administering *Amrit*,

one carrying the bowl, the other passing it on, the remaining three officiants should stand two steps behind, in a straight line, facing the petitioners, and in the attention posture.

10. When the *Amrit* is thus administered to the petitioner, the two officiants should step back to join the other three officiants, and all the five in unison, then should say :

“Wonderous God, One, Numenon, Phenomenon, Truth, Name, Creator, Person, Without fear, Without malice, Timeless, Form, Unborn, Self-existent-subsistent, Light, Gracious.”<sup>4</sup> And the petitioners should then repeat in unison, the same formula. This should be done five times.

11. Then one of the officiants should address the petitioner or the petitioners thus : Today you take a new birth in the House of the Guru.<sup>5</sup>

You have become a Knight of the Order of the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh is the Father, and holy Sahib Kaur<sup>6</sup> the Mother of the Order of the, Khalsa. Your birth place is the Blessed Fort of the Sacred Uncut Hair<sup>7</sup> and you are a citizen of the Town of Bliss.<sup>8</sup> Your previous, race, name, genealogy, country, religion, customs and beliefs, your subconscious pulls and tensions, *samskar*, and your personality have today been burnt up, annihilated and transmuted. Believe it to be so, without a doubt and with the whole of your soul. You have become the Khalsa,<sup>9</sup> a sovereign man today owing allegiance to no earthly person or powers. One God Almighty, the Timeless, is your only Sovereign to whom you owe allegiance, and He alone is entitled to your devotion and worship. The way to final fulfillment of human destiny, *mukti*, is laid down in the Revelations of the *Guru Granth* and the teachings of the Ten Gurus. Follow this Way and no other. Learn *Gurmukhi-script* if you do not already know it (till such time that the *Guru Granth* becomes available to you in your own mother or other known tongue to you), and read or hear read out and explained, the *Guru Granth* daily, as far as practicable and recite the five compositions of the Gurus, the first three in the morning, the fourth at sunset, and the last before retiring for night, viz. the *Japu* the *Japa*, the *Ten Swayyios*, the *Rahiras* and the *Kirtan Sohila*. Keep intact five symbols of the Khalsa, the five K's on you, the uncut hair (*kesha*), a comb (*kangha*), an iron-bangle (*cada*), a sword (*kirpan*), and short drawers (*kachha*). Do not commit these four grave breaches of discipline. (1) To trim or shave hair of the body. (2) To eat *kosher* meat or that obtained by similar semitic methods.<sup>10</sup> (3) To have unnatural sex gratification or sexual relationship outside the marital bond and (4) To use tobacco. Any of these grave breaches of discipline results in automatic suspension from the membership of the Order of the Khalsa of the culprit and a re-initiation ceremony of *Amrit* administration in full is then necessary, after penance, for restoration of his original status. Till such re-enrolment, he is a *patit* a fallen limb of the Order, a drop out, so to speak. Association with such as are guilty of these four grave offences is forbidden to the Khalsa, till their expiation and reinitiation. Remain ever ready to serve the *Khalsa Panth*, and through it the whole humanity. What ever you earn as your livelihood, which must be through lawful means and through productive effort, a one-tenth of it must always be given away to further common-wealth, to the Central Treasury of the Khalsa, and all your life must be lived in a Sikh-like manner, which means, the Discipline of the Name, earning of livelihood through legitimate and productive effort, and sharing the fruits thereof with others. Be a disciplined member of the Khalsa, always and if you commit an error, confess it before an assembly of the Khalsa, and accept the penance, they impose upon you, and be careful in future.

12. The following five groups of men are actively and basically hostile to the organisational purity of the Khalsa. Do not enter into any enduring social relationship with any of them, such as marriage, till the individual duly joins the Khalsa Brotherhood and undertakes to observe its discipline. A disregard of this precept entails culpability, (literally, makes him a defaulter, a salaried servant, *tankhabia*.<sup>11</sup>

(1) The *Minas*, the *Dhirmalias*, the *Ram-raiyas*, the *Masands*. These in the past have tried to create schism in the historical growth of the true Sikh doctrine, and also those who become *patits*.

(2) Those who establish social intercourse of common dining or marriage relationship, with any of these.

(3) Those who dye their hair or use make-up, in vanity to appear other than what they are.

(4) Those who corrupt the institution of marriage by basing it on secular, monetary, and somatic considerations.

(5) Those who use intoxicants to befog their minds to escape from reality.

Be diligent and remain alert always to maintain your integrity and authenticity.

13. After these instructions have been thus parted to the petitioner, then one of the officiants should again lead the congregational prayer, the *ardas*, and then the “Order” that is, the sortilege guidance of the *Guru Granth* should be taken seeking blessings to and ratification of the due enrollment of the petitioner to the Order of the Khalsa, and the first letter of this “Order”, should normally, though not necessarily, form the first letter of the new name, if it is desired to be given to the petitioner.

14. The sacrament, *Karraḥprasad*, should then be distributed to those present, and all the newly created knights then should partake of the sacramental food from a common bowl.

15. The ceremony of Initiation is now over and complete, and the congregation should now disperse.

## II

Here are English translations of the opening lines from the five compositions which are recited when *Amrit* is prepared.

The *Japu*. “1. Absolute. Truth. Name. Creator. Person. Sans fear. Sans-malafides. Time-less. Person. Without birth. Self-subsistent. Light. Gracious. The *Japu* (begins). True, beyond the Flux of Time. True, at the commencement of Time-cycles. True, without the Time Flux, and True shall also be, for ever and evermore, says Nanak. By human mind He cannot be comprehended even though it cogitated a hundred thousand times. Nor by suppressing and annulling this cogitation doth the human mind reach the Silence (of Self-realisation), even though it achieve single-pointed concentration without a break. By accumulating the goods of all the worlds, tangible and intangible, the Lust for grasping within is not satiated. No amount of profound wisdom or possession of know-how availeth. (Then) how shall man come near unto Truth; how may the Veil of Error be lifted up and rent? Nanak (answers) : “Living and acting (in social context), in harmony with following the Law of God and His Will, accessible to man as embedded in the depths of his own heart. 1. This Law createth the archetypal Forms; This Law cannot be stated. This Law createth the life-monads with urge to grow and evolve implanted in them. The lower and the higher is determined by this Law. The Pleasure and Pain to all sentient beings is apportioned by this Law. By this Law, some receive Grace and are thus delivered, and others wander about, in cyclic existence. All that is, is within the compass of the Law. Nanak (explains), he who understands the Law, never then says ‘I am .2.’”

The *Jap*. “That which hath neither features nor characteristics, nor contour, colour or caste, nor genealogy. There is naught to say for anyone, what its form, what its complexion, what its physiognomy and what its dress. Stable Entity, the Light *suigeneris*, without measure, so it be stated. Count countless gods, the Kings of gods, earthly kings and their Emperors. (And) the lords of all the three worlds, the gods, the mortals, and the titans, all these (together) (Still) every blade of grass beareth witness to, “Not that,” “Not that, *neti, neti*.” Who can make an all-true proposition *sarvnam* about Thee and the wise, thus, utter adjectival statements (to refer to Thee). 1. Salutation to the Timeless. Salutation to the Compassionate. Salutation to the Formless. Salutation to the Incomparable. 2. Salutation to the One without a persuasion. Salutation to the Measureless. Salutation to the One and Alone. Salutation to the Unborn. 3. Salutation to the Non-aggregate. Salutation to the Disintegrate. Salutation to the Name-less. Salutation to the Non-resident. 4. Salutation to the Deed-less. Salutation to the Law-less, Salutation to the Description-less. Salutation to the Home-less. 5. Salutation to the Unconquered. Salutation to the Unsurrendering. Salutation to the Un-fortified. Salutation to the Un-demolished. 6. Salutation to the Space-less. Salutation to the

Un-consumed. 7. Salutation to the Non-aggregate. Salutation to the Disintegrate. Salutation to the Liberal. Salutation to the Shore-less. 8. Salutation to the One-alone. Salutation to the Many. 9. Salutation to the Substance-less. Salutation to the Unyoked. 10.”

*Sudha Sawaiyyas.* I went to Houses of the *śravaks*, the Jaina-monks, ‘the True ones’, the *Siddha-teams*, the Yogis, and the Celibates, the Sun-worshippers, the saints and anchorites of many persuasions. Throughout the world, I saw and scrutinised, but I did not meet anyone with the Religion of the Lord of Life. Without the grace of the Lord of the Grace, the Lord God, all sects are worthless. 1. The inebriated war-elephants, covered with gold-cloth, bedecked with jewels, without a compeer, protected with glittering mail coats, Countless war-steeds, nimble like a deer, and swifter than wind. And mighty monarchs, with vassals and allies, countless and without number. Such a mighty Emperor of men as this, and yet what of it, for in the end he must depart unshod and unclad. 2. They may subdue country after country, with bugles blowing and trumpets blaring. Surrounded by herds of war-elephants uttering proboscisic cries, and thousands of horses neighing in battle excitement. Such world-conquerors of the past, present and the future are so numerous as to be uncountable. Without remembrance of God, all these lords of the earth go in the end to where every thing goes in the end.3.”

*Bainati Chaupai.* Protect us with Thy Hand as our shield. May our aims be fulfilled. May our minds rest concentrated at Thy Feet. Sustain us, knowing us to be Thy slaves. 1. Destroy all the evil around us. Save us through Thine own intervention. May those, our allies and dependents, live in felicity. My aides and my disciples, all of them, O, God, 2. Safeguard me with Thine own Hand: Destroy all my enemies here and now. May my hopes be completely fulfilled. May I ever remain athirst for Thy Love. 3. May I love nought but Thee. May I receive every blessing from Thee alone. Save my helpers and my disciples. Alleviate my ills and pains. 4. Uplift me with Thine own Hand. Destroy my fear of the Hour of Death. By ever our support. Lord of the Banners; grant us safe conduct. 5. Protector, protect me, Thou. The Lord, the Guide-saint, the Ally and the Beloved. The Helper of the poor, the Vanquisher of the evil ones. Thou art our Refuge in all the fourteen Regions. 6. Brahma, the Creator-Demiurge, carne into being with the Time-cycles. The Vishnu, the Sustainer, the Primordial Person, is also encompassed by Time. All this Phenomenon is grounded in Time. 7. The Time, which made Siva, the Lord of the yogis. Which created Brahma, the knower of Vedas. The Time, which made all the temporal universes. To That, our salutations. 8. The Time that created all the worlds. And created the gods, the titans and the genii. The Time, which is the same one in the Beginning and the End. Verily, that is our Light and Guide. 9. To Him alone we salute. He who hath created all the creatures; He giveth unending joys to His own. He destroyeth them that deny Him.” 10

*Anand Sabib.* “Brethren, the Light of God is my Guide and peace is in my heart. The Light hath brought Realization, and my mind is instinct with joy. The gods and goddesses of Music and cosmic Harmony have assembled to make heavenly music of bliss. Sing (ye also) the praises of God, O, servants of God, Nanak sayeth, the peace hath descended into my heart and true Light is my Guide, 1. O, heart mine, be with God ever. Remain with God, O, my heart, and have sorrow and pain no more. He, whom God accepts, his problems are solved. Forget not Him, the God Almighty. Nanak sayeth, O, heart mine, remain with God, ever. 2. True, Lord, what hast Thou not in Thy House. All everything is there in Thine House. But he alone receiveth whom Thou givest. (Thy greatest gift), Thy praises and Thy adoration, bestow upon us by implanting the Name in our hearts. Where the Name resideth, in that heart the divine music of the Presence of God is heard too. Nanak sayeth : True Lord, what hast Thou not in Thine House.3.”

1. *Sikh Rabit maryada* (Punjabi), published by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sri Amritsar, 1950, pp. 1-9.

2. *Bir*, or *Vira*, literally means hero, one who is endowed with *viryam*, heroic efforts. Hero-posture is considered most appropriate for shooting arrows from a bow, in battle array. The Ideal hero is



portrayed in Indian sculpture and iconography, by the carved figure of a *tirthankar*, such, for instance, as is represented by the statue of Rsabhanath, at Mount Abu temples (11<sup>th</sup> Century) and the stone colossus of Gommata at the Sravana Belgola mound (10<sup>th</sup> Century). Here, the Ideal Man stands erect in the attitude of, *kayotsarga*, “dismissing the body,” in a rigid immobile posture, with arms held stiffly down, as in the “attention” military exercise. He has a fully developed chest, a firm abdomen, normal and unbulged, and otherwise an athletic figure of almost Greek proportions. He is a *vira*, a hero, for he has conquered his lower self and achieved the supreme human victory. That is why the twenty fourth Jaina *tirthankar*, is styled, Mahavira, the great hero. It was a happy admixture of these two ideals, the physical and the spiritual, which Guru Gobind Singh had in view on this occasion, with primacy of the spiritual. *Nanak vichon abamakaran* — declares, a hero is one and his is the heroic effort, who destroys the enemy entrenched within himself, the evil self-centredness.

*Nanak, so sura varyam jin vichon dust abamakaran maria* — *Guru Granth. Var Srirag. III.*

3. English translations of a few first lines out of each of these five texts, are given at the end.

4. *Waheguru. Ek. Omkar. Sat. Namu. Karta. Purkhu. Nirbhau. Nirvair. Akal. Murat. Ajuni. Saibhang. Gur. Prasadi.*

“*Waheguru* is the focal Word around which the Sikh discipline of the Name revolves. It was adopted as the basic concept of the Sikh thought and the esoteric essence of Sikhism, from the times of Guru Nanak. It is found in the revelations of the early Sikh Gurus, as preserved in the *Guru Granth*. It was not a new concept, though the word itself has been coined by the Sikh Gurus, for the concept is of an ancient origin. The Chinese pilgrims, who visited India in the seventh century, testify that, in the Buddhist congregations when any exposition was made of some profound or basic metaphysical doctrine of the religion, it was customary for the member of the congregation to murmur in appreciation, “Wahu, wahu,” (Wonderous, wonderous) and an approbatory reference to this practice exists in the *Guru Granth* itself, “Wonderous, wonderous is truly expressive of the waking reactions of the religious-man.”\*

\* Wabu, wahu, gurmukh sada karhi. — *Gujri III*

This writer has himself witnessed this practice in vogue in the assemblies of the Namdhari Sikhs, at their headquarters, Bhaini Sahib. In the occult Tibet, the expression, *samyagya*, is uttered or written before all sacred knowledge, indicating that teachings are too profound and esoteric to be taught to, or comprehended by, any save the purified and the disciplined. The formula is itself regarded as a seal of secrecy on the esoteric teachings. *Samyagya* is the exact equivalent of the Sikh esoteric formula, *Wahegruu*. *Samya*, means infallible knowledge, which is complete realisation of the Self, and *gya* word of the Tibetan language is originally a Sanskrit word, which means, ‘wonderous’, wahu. The meanings of the formula, *Waheguru*, have been given by the famous Sikh theologian, Bhai Santokh Singh, in his *Nanak Prakash*, (I. 1.62-63) as follows : “Wahu means, wonderous, that which cannot be described by means of propositions or syllogism, Gu, means, Inertia, Matter, Nescience. Transience, and Ru, means, the destroyer of them, the Light that animates, and sustains Pure Consciousness.” *Wahu nam acraj ko hoi, acraj te par ukat na koi, gu, tam tan-agnan anitt, ru, prakash kio jin citta.*” The formula taught to the initiate, when he is knighted to the Order of the Khalsa, prefixed by the esoteric utterance, *waheguru*, speaks of the basic Truth and knowledge of the Sikh Religion and Practice.

5. Compare, “Thou art now my son, born out of my mouth, the son of *Dhamma*.” — *Ittivuttakam*. 100. Also, “Thou art my loving Son; this day have I begotten thee.” — *Luke*. iii. 22.

6. A celibate wife of Guru Gobind Singh who was granted the privilege of adding sugar plums to the *Amrit*, that was first prepared by the Guru on March 30, 1699.

7. The geographical location of the place, called *Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib*, is on a spur of a mound in the town of Anandpur in the Indian Punjab. For the significance of the uncut hair See. Appendix II. of the author’s book in English, *The Parasharprasna*. Hind Publishers, Jullundur 1959.

8. The name of the town, *Anandpur*, (Anandpur Sahib), is literal equivalent of Mahayan Buddhist concept of *Sukhvati-vyuh* contained in the *Sukhvati-vyuh*, of Nalanda fame. *Sukhvati* is a luxuriant

apocalyptic heaven situated in the *Dharamdhatu* Region of Pure Forms, divorced from Desire and presided over by the *Bodhisattava*, *Amitabha*. Into this heaven are born all those, who through faith, have controlled and canalised their emotions to the Ideal. The paradise of Mohammed, described in the Koran appears to be a somewhat hazy and fragmentary reflection of this paradise of the Sukhvativuh. Amitabha, the presiding-deity of this heaven, in his previous life on earth, was a king, who moved by the preachings of the Buddha of his age, renounced his throne and the world, to achieve the highest realization, the Buddhahood. At some stage of his spiritual quest and career, he made a series of famous vows, *pranidhan*, the eighteenth of which is as follows : “If after my obtaining Buddhahood, all beings in the ten Quarters should not desire in sincerity and faith, to be born into my region, the *Sukhavati*, and if they should not be born only thinking of me ten times (except those who have committed the five grave offences and are abusive of the true *Dharma*), may I not attain the Nirvana.” (Quoted in, Pratt : The Pilgrimage of Buddhism, p. 480). Thus, Amitabha renounced the reward of his efforts in order to preside over the Sukhavati, until all beings had arrived there. Citizenship Ideal of Amitabha, the Bhakti Yoga, at its best, where the Ideal of the service of humanity is grounded in a grand compassion, the deliberately cultivated power of self - abnegation and Self-realisation, where through Grace awakened within, the clamour and glamour of the illusion of the individual self dies away.

9. ‘*Khalsa*’ is a Perso-Turkish administrative term, which means, royal, not subordinate to anyone, answerable to none subordinate, sovereign, directly administered by the sovereign.

10. According to the ancient Aryan Hindu tradition, only such meat as is obtained from an animal which is killed with one stroke of the weapon, thus causing instantaneous death, without exciting the fear glands secreting poisons into its blood stream, and without causing harmful psychic waves to emanate from the animal mind, is deemed fit for human consumption. Under the influence of compassionate Buddhism, the flesh became taboo to the generality of the Hindus. With the establishment of Islam, and the Muslim political hegemony in India, it became an item of state policy in India, not to permit slaughter of animals for food, in any other manner except that made lawful by the Koran, which is the kosher method, of slowly severing the main blood artery of the throat of the animal, while reciting religious formulae, the main object of slaughtering in this manner being, a “sacrifice” to God to expiate sins of the slaughterer, and its flesh as food being only a secondary object. (“Without shedding of blood is no remission,” *Hebrew*: 9 22 “It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” *Lev*: 17.1) Guru Gobind Singh took a rather serious view of this aspect of the whole matter, and while making it permissive to eat flesh as food, repudiated the whole theory of this expiatory sacrifice and the right of the ruling Muslims to impose it upon others. He made the ancient practice of obtaining meat by instantaneous death *jhatka* as obligatory, but for food only.

11. In the Sikh slang, the *sandhyabhasha*, or the twilight language, the term, ‘salaried servant’, is employed to mean a ‘defaulter’ or ‘one guilty of a breach of discipline’, for the good reason that he who accepts salaried employment owes allegiance to, undertakes to serve, a mortal, and therefore, is not a true Khalsa, a free man, owing allegiance to none other than the Timeless One.

12. *The Sikh Rahitmaryada*, op.cit., pp. 32-37.

## CHAPTER XI

### CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

The following is a translation of congregational prayer of the of the Sikhs :

1. Formless-form, To God, the abiding Victory. (Composition of the 10<sup>th</sup> King.)

To begin with, we invoke the Dynamic aspects of God and we remember Guru Nanak (This One and only God) which inspired Gurus Angad, Amar Dass and Ram Dass.

We invoke the Light that shone through the Gurus, Arjun, Hargobind, and Hari Rai.

Let us invoke the Light that was the blessed Harikrishan, whose Vision heals all pains.

We call upon Guru Teg Bahadur through whom came the Kingdom of Heaven<sup>1</sup> to earth.

May, (the God and the Gurus) help us everywhere.<sup>2</sup> Tenth King, Guru Gobind Singh, may he help us every where.

The Spirit of all the Ten Kings enshrined in the visible Body and the World of the Guru Granth, concentrate on that and say, Sires, "Glory be to God"<sup>3</sup>

(The Congregation: Glory be to God.)

Five Beloved Ones, Four Princes,<sup>4</sup> Forty Saved Ones,<sup>5</sup> those who have remained steadfast in persecution and suffering, those who have kept constant remembrance of God, those who refused to be charmed by the passing sense pleasures, those who have constantly lived in the Divine presence, those who have loved their neighbours by sharing their possessions with them, those who have turned a blind eye of charity to the faults and failings of others, those who have assuaged the hunger and Want of the hungry and the needy, those who have persevered in their struggles in the cause of Justice, concentrate your minds on the steadfastness and achievements of those. O, revered members of the Order of the Khalsa, and say 'Glory be to God'.

(The congregation : Glory be to God.)

The Singhs of both the sexes, Who courted martyrdom in the cause of Religion and underwent unspeakable tortures and sufferings of being dismembered alive, scalped alive, broken on the wheels sawed alive and boiled alive, and those Who made sacrifices in the service of the centres of the Sikh Religion, the *gurdwaras*, but never wavered in their faith and remained steadfast in mind and spirit in the cause of Sikhism to the last hair of their body and to their last breath, O, revered members of the Khalsa Order, fix your minds on the glorious deeds of those, and utter; 'Glory be to God

(The congregation:: Glory be to God.)

First we pray on behalf of all the creatures of God;<sup>6</sup> May the presence of God be progressively felt in the hearts of all the sentient creatures, and may in the whole creation become happy, prosperous and transfigured thereby. (Then) .may God shower His blessings upon and grant protection to each and every member of the Order of the Khalsa, wherever he or they may happen to be.

May the Supplies of the . Khalsa ever remain replenished. May the Sword of the Khalsa be ever victorious.

May the Royal title of the 'Khalsa' be universally recognised and honoured'<sup>7</sup> May victory attend upon all just endeavours of the *Panth*, the Khalsa Commonwealth. May; the arms and armaments be our constant allies.

May the Order of the Khalsa achieve everexpanding progress and supremacy.

Sires, say, 'Glory be to God'

(The congregation : Glory be to God.)

May God grant to the Sikhs, the gift of faith the gift of the uncut sacred hair, the *Keshas*, the

gift of Discipline, the gift of spiritual Discrimination, the gift of mutual trust, the gift of self confidence and the supreme Gift of all gifts, the gift of Communion with God, the Name, and may Sikhs freely centre around and dip in the holy lake of Amritsar, the symbol of the True Revelation of Supreme Truth, granted to mankind by God through the Guru.<sup>8</sup>

May the Government centres, the Banners, the Cantonments of the Khalsa ever remain inviolate.

May the Cause of Truth and Justice prevail everywhere and at all times.

Sires, utter, 'Glory be to God,'

(The congregation: Glory be to God.)

May the passions in the minds of the Sikhs remain calm and the reason flow clear. And may Reason always be guided by the Light of God.

God, Almighty, our Protector and Helper ever, restore to us the right and privilege of unhindered management and free service of and access to the Nankana Sahib, and other centres of the Sikh religion, the *gurudwaras*, throughout the world.<sup>9</sup>

God, the Helper of the helpless, the Strength of the weak the Support of the fallen, the true Father of all, Lord God.

(Here, the specific purpose and occasion for the prayer is stated by the leader in suitable terms and the blessings and aid of God are beseeched.)

God, forgive us our remissnesses.

Extend Thy helping Hand to all and every one.

Grant us the company of those who may help keep Thy name fresh in our hearts.

May Thy Name, the Religion preached by Nanak, prevail and prosper for ever and for ever more.

May Thy will be done wherein lies the good of all.

The Khalsa is of God and to Him the victory, always and forever. (Here the whole congregation bow to God by touching the ground with their fore-heads, as is the oriental fashion, and the whole congregation then stand up and chant in unison :)

"The Will of God hath ordained the order of the Khalsa.

This is the firm commandment to all the Sikhs : Accept *Granth* as the visible Body of the Gurus.

He whose mind is disciplined and well-oriented shall find confirmation thereof in the Revelation itself."

The Khalsa shall prevail at the centres of power, and there shall remain no effective opposite camp.

All must come in, in the end, after bitter frustration, for the Humanity shall eventually be redeemed through the Way of life which the Khalsa upholds."

The whole congregation then shout a full throated cry :

*Sat Sri Akal*. "The Existence — joy."<sup>10</sup>

1. Literally, "the Nine Treasures of Life", which signify spiritual abundance and material plenty.

2. *Dasamgrath*. *Varsiribhagmutijiki*, 1..

3. Literally, "say Sires, Sri Waheguru."

4. The four sons of Guru Gobind Singh who all gave their lives for the cause of the Religion.

5. Forty Sikhs who after a momentary wavering of faith, sacrificed their lives in the cause of Religion in 1705 A.D. at the battlefield of Muktsar, now in the Indian Punjab.

6. *Sarbatt Khalsa* signifies the whole humanity and all the sentient creatures, in the Sikh idiom, in contradistinction to *Samuh Khalsa* which signifies all the members of the Order of the Khalsa. This distinction is vital, though these terms are sometimes used confusedly.

7. *Birad ki pajj-birad* (Sanskrit, *biruda*) means, royal and imperial titles and surnames, regal pretensions and claims. The title of, Khalsa, is a *biruda*.

8. *Amritsar satguru sataveta.* — *Guru Granth*

9. Literally, 'Out of which we are expelled', a poignant reference to historical and other Sikh *gurdwaras*, left in Pakistan in 1947.

10. This translation has been made from the standard Congregational Prayer approved by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, as published in their hymnal, *Sundargutka*. 1951. *pp.* 169-73.